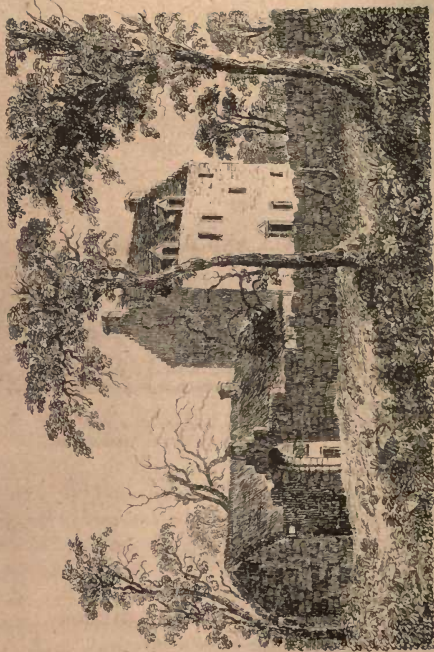


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THE  
PHILOSOPHY  
OF  
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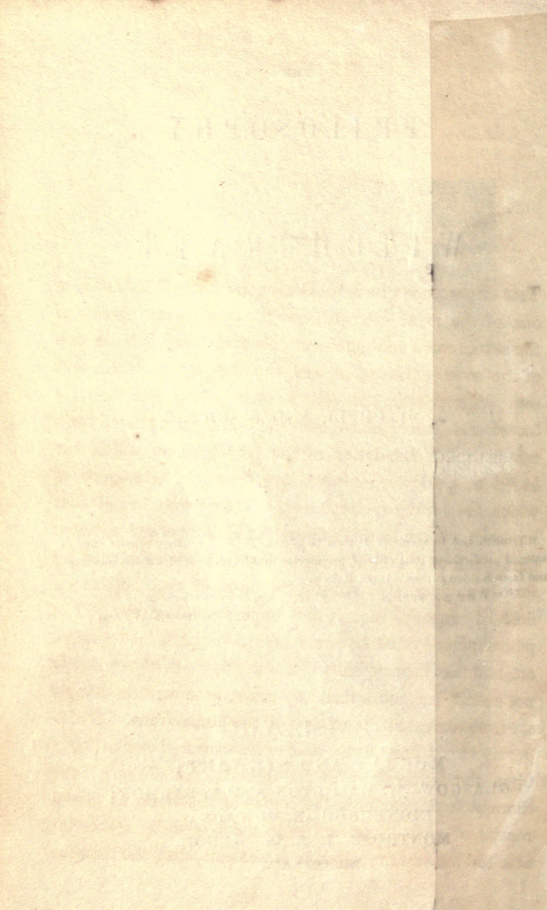
BY  
J. MITCHELL AND JN. DICKIE.

“I mean not to speak of Divine prophecies, nor of heathen oracles, nor of natural predictions; but only of prophecies that have been of hidden memory and from hidden causes.—LORD BACON.”

“What reason cannot comprehend, belief can never claim.”

*SATAN—a Poem*

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## P R E F A C E.

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THE importance given to Demonology, or Witchcraft, is one of the most extraordinary features in the history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and exhibits one of the most extravagant and unphilosophical beliefs that ever disgraced the credulity of man. Men, the most talented and learned, have bent the whole strength of their minds to the elucidation of the principles on which was based this popular opinion, and from the prevalence of which has sprung so much evil. Notwithstanding all that has been written on this subject, the Editors are of opinion, that much of the bold outline that has been sketched by former authors, still remains to be filled up, and offers a field of extensive inquiry and important discovery. The philosophy of mind has ever been a subject of deep interest, and that department which leads to a belief in "things not seen," has, more than any other, promoted the happiness, or increased the misery of the human race. Considering that much of the value of historical science depends upon the authenticity of its records, the Editors have thought it advisable, in the course of the work, to give a reprint of such documents as to them seemed most valuable for the validity of their statements, and the remark-

In the selection of the cases which we have laid before the public, we have made it our study to select those that differed most in their general features from one another ; and we fondly hope that the remarks which we have made on them, will not be considered too liberal for the present generation. Freedom of inquiry is making rapid strides among us, and the thick mists of ignorance are gradually withdrawing themselves from our moral horizon. When they are completely dissipated, our descendants, when reading the histories of, to them, long past superstitions, will lift their hands with wonder and regret at the wickedness of their fathers, and thank their good fortune that they live in a time when such fooleries and cruelties have no place among men. That such a time may soon arrive, must certainly be the sincere wish of every right thinking man.

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# THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITCHCRAFT.

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## INTRODUCTION.

THE Philosophy of Demonology, or Witchcraft, involves in it, in a greater or lesser degree, the history of a considerable portion of the inhabitants of every age and nation, and embraces, within the wide range of its illustrations, the consideration of some of the most important faculties of the human mind. No subject presents itself with deeper interest,—none opens a wider field of observation and discovery, than the investigation of the first dawnings of intellectual improvement, manifested in the mysterious workings of inscrutable mind.

The study of mind has, in every age, arrested the notice, and commanded the talent of the most enlightened among men. The imagination ever loves to wander back, amid the gloom of past ages, and to trace, though feebly, the first faint glimmerings of celestial light, gradually breaking in upon the obscurity of mental darkness. We naturally love to dwell upon the primitive state of our ancestors, and look through the long vista of years, with an intensity of feeling that struggles to penetrate the deep darkness with which time has veiled the interesting events that led the mind onward from barbarity to civilization.

In tracing the progress of mind, downward, from the early period, when its budding faculties, like the young leaf of infant spring, was new, to the highly improved, and



loudly boasted intellectual character of the present age, we are not more surprised at the advances it has made, than at the tenacity with which it clings to a vast amount of the prejudices and superstitions of the darker period of its history. Nor is it easy to assign a satisfactory reason for the seeming retrograde movement of mind, as it gradually merged from a more enviable state of rudeness and simplicity, into the deeper shades of a gloomy superstition, that trembled under the influence of a supposed demon power which ruled its destinies, and with capricious malignity tortured, even to death, the victims of its hate.

A few general remarks on this important subject—illustrative of the cause of the almost universal belief of the existence of beings of superior power, presiding, not only over the great operations of nature, but mixing with mankind, and to an unlimited extent influencing and directing his actions—will, it is presumed, be a suitable introduction to this work.

When we take a view of man, in the early period of his history, we find him simple and rude in character, and ignorant and uninformed, respecting the great laws which regulated his happiness, and promoted his well-being.

The splendid, the attractive volume of nature, was, to him a fountain sealed, and all her grandeur a dread display of unconceived power. He saw not the finger of unsparing goodness, in the numerous objects around him, nor the beautiful adaptation of these objects to his wants and necessities. His ignorance of the arts, removed the common necessities of life beyond his reach, and left him dependent upon the spontaneous productions of nature—the deep cave his dwelling—the cold earth his bed—the rude-formed spear his wealth—the living beasts his prey—destruction his employment—combat his past-time, and vengeance his glory. These were the materials that gave strength to his rampant passions. No stimuli called his moral powers into healthful exercise, or roused his slumbering energies into activity. 'Tis true, he loved himself,



and in common with the brute he loved his offspring; beyond these limits he did not seek to pass. Benevolence, which takes a wider range, embracing all mankind in one vast brotherhood, found no place within his savage breast. He saw, in every thing around him, a constant succession of changes, which the utmost stretch of his limited understanding<sup>d</sup> could not comprehend. He gazed with awe upon the burning sun, and hid his face with fear, when the thunder-cloud flung from its dingy folds the forked lightning. He saw the oak that lately stood the monarch of the forest, now a scathed fragment; and the deer, that bounded before the wind, stricken by an unseen hand, and, by a viewless wound, laid prostrate on the earth. Ignorant of the laws that regulated the great operations of nature, he was led to ascribe these seeming evils to the vindictive passion of some evil power, and associated, by easy transition, the various phenomena of wind and rain, of storm and tempest, with the sportive malignity of that power used for the purpose of terrifying and torturing the sons of men.\*

But it was not the cheerless and threatening aspects of natural phenomena alone, that led the uninformed mind to a belief in spiritual power. Good often resulted from seeming evil, and active pleasure followed passive pain. The howling storm ceased to heave its tortured clouds,

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\* The Caribs, who inhabited St. Vincents, and several others of the West India Islands, are well known for their deficient reasoning powers, and so imperfect was their language, that with the exception of the names of some *good and evil spirits*, it was incapable of expressing any relation that did not fall under the notice of the five senses. One of them, on being informed that God was the author of thunder, remarked "that he could not be good, since he took so much pleasure in terrifying them with it." Another savage, who was found at work upon a Sunday, was told that "the Being who made the heaven and the earth would be angry with him, as He had set apart that day for His own service." The Carib, unable to penetrate beyond what he saw with his eyes, replied, "I am angry at your God; you say he is the ruler of the world and of the seasons;—it is he, then, who has not sent rain, and has caused my manioc and potatoes to die. Since he has used me so ill, I shall work all Sunday to vex him."—*Histoire Naturelle et Morale des Iles Antilles*, 1658.

and the raging sea to lash the sullen shore. The rippling blast of winter was followed by the mellow breath of summer, and the "seared and fallow leaf" of autumn was succeeded by the blushing blossom of the spring. The intensity of the glowing sun, was softened by the fleecy cloud, and the moon moved in reflective majesty among the stars. The beauty of the azure sky was reflected in the deeper blue of the sea; and the murmuring of the summer breeze was sweetened by the "floating music" of the grove. In these moments of stillness and of beauty, the angry passions, even of savage man, felt the influence, and were hushed in harmony with universal nature. This powerfully disposed him to believe in the existence, not of evil, but of good spirits, who not only delighted to please him, but were vigilant in watching the actions, and restraining the evil and wicked designs of the spirits that were at enmity with him.

Another and most powerful mean of promoting a belief in supernatural agency, was the early, and we may say universal belief, in the immortality of the soul. Man soon discovered, that every thing around him was liable to change, alternating in forms decidedly opposed in appearance to each other. He saw every form of created being yielding to this immutable law of nature. He saw the mysterious agent, life, for a time controlling the tendency to dissolution, but the "sure destroyer," at last prevailed. He had seen the wild beast of the forest fall by the hand of violence, and the flower of the field trodden down, to wither and to die. He had seen the innocence of childhood crushed before the moth—had wailed the death of vigorous manhood, and shed the tear of sorrow o'er the hoary corse of ripened age. By these means he was early taught, that man was a compound of body and of soul. He saw death, and he looked upon it with fear. He enjoyed life, and he loved it, even for its own sake. He consequently looked forward, with painful anxiety, to the dark boundary that was to close upon his present being. His mind sickened at the contemplation—it turned a fugitive

from its own thoughts, and sought to dispel the gloomy apprehension, in the pleasing hope of immortality—a hope enduring as the term of life, and cheering as the love of existence—a hope, that gives smoothness to the pillow of sickness, and endurance to the parting pang of dissolution—a hope, that cheers the patriot to the tide of battle, and spreads a halo o'er the martyr's grave—a hope, that dispels the gloom that hangs above the tomb, and sheds its gilded beams upon the portals that are to open on “another and a better world.”

The hope of immortality is not confined to a peculiar creed—it has its origin in the human mind, and has received the almost universal consent of mankind, in every age and clime. Tribes have been found, to whom the notion of a Creator was unknown, but never were a people found who had not, in some shape or other, some belief and tradition of the re-appearance of the dead.

The Esquimaux, that shivers beneath a polar sky, and Ishmael's wandering tribes, oppressed with the burning heat of Arabia's arid sands, breathe its sweet influence, and people space with the disembodied spirits of their departed relatives, which, though invisible to mortals, yet take an active part in the affairs of those they have left behind.

Pope, speaking of the Indian's hope of immortality, has beautifully expressed this primitive feeling, even in the breast of savage and unenlightened man. Of him he says :—

“ Yet simple nature to his *hope* has given,  
Beyond the cloud capp'd hill, a humbler heaven,  
Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,  
Some happier island in the watery waste,  
Where slaves, once more their native land behold,  
No *fends* torment, no tyrants thirst for gold.”

This feeling naturally arises out of the ardent wish to be remembered and applauded by the living, after we have been removed, by death, from them. The meanest individual, who has not lived in crime or perished in infamy, softens the agony of his closing existence with the fond hope, that, when gone, he shall be remembered by the

inmates of his lonely cottage, by the partners of his toil, and the rustio associates of his amusements. Hence arise the pleasures we derive from paying our tribute of affection for the dead. The mourner, with feelings approaching to awe, visits the scenes formerly frequented by the departed friend of his bosom, or the object of his love. He seeks, as it were, again to behold the form of which the grave has deprived him for ever, and whose spirit, he flatters himself, may be hovering around him, though unseen, and approving, though unheard, the devotional breathings of his unabated attachment. The hope of immortality, besides being excited in the mind of man by the feeling of love of life, is confirmed by the alternating changes which are continually taking place in the constitution of the numerous organized beings around him. He beholds the flower expand in loveliness, then change its form, grow pale, decay, and die. He sees the leaves of the forest, waving in gayest green, forsake their parent stem, and, rustling before the breeze, bestrew the wasted sward; but young spring returns, covering the earth as with a carpet, adorning the heathy hills, in all the graduated beauty of aerial distance, and flinging loveliness and new-created life, into the lap of reviving nature. He beholds childhood, thrown like a flower, upon the tide of time, smiling its budding blossoms into manhood, and gathered, in his ripeness, to the grave. Does man, then, sink into eternal rest; and does oblivion close for ever on his being? No; the soul recoils upon itself, and shudders at the thought. Annihilation makes even rude and savage man tremble; and he who knows the Christian's hope, looks with an eye of faith beyond the grave, and to the mountains in the distance, blue with softening shade—or to the deep retiring woods, he strains his longing eyes, and breathes a prayer, that when death's leaden slumbers weigh his eyelids down, he, with his faithful dog, ever there may dwell. He regards the grave only as a place of change—the midnight hour of being—the break-

ing in of light on immortality—at once the trophy and the tomb of death itself.

The love of life is common to every living thing,—from the worm that only lives to spin her task, to man who hopes for life immortal.—All cling to life with tenacious fondness. Nor is the strength of this feeling less ardent in the mind even of the infidel. It is the natural foundation of the belief in a future state, and luxuriates in the hope of a world to come; and hope gives the tendency to anticipate its fulfilment. Life is shorn of its beams, and hope withers beneath the cheerless prospect of infidelity. Yet, so powerful is this feeling, and so genial to the constitution of man, that even the votary of infidelity, like the culprit on the scaffold, desires to live, although he has no hope of living.

But it is not in organized being only that we are to look for this destroying and reproducing principle. Every form of created being must yield obedience to the immutable laws of nature. The temples where our fathers worship pass away. Palaces built with a nation's treasure crumble into ruin. Monuments intended to give a posthumous immortality to man, totter to their fall, and the solid frame-work of the earth is furrowed with the flux of years.

But there is a something that braves destruction—whose elements do not grow old nor die. The fire may destroy organic form, and the winds of heaven scatter the residuum, but that inscrutable element whose mysterious agency is life, can never be destroyed, till nature's doom is fixed, and all her forms are stamped with the impress of eternity.

In our examination of the predisposing causes that first led mankind to a belief in the existence of spirits warring with each other for ascendancy over the destinies of the human race, we have adverted only to the impressions made on the rude and uninformed mind, by the observation of atmospherical and other changes, which were passing in continual review before him, blending the hope of



immortality with the fear of dissolution, and mingling the fervour of devotion with the superstition of ignorance.

The causes we have now to consider, though equally dependent on impressions made upon the mind through the medium of the *brain*, are yet less the objects of the external senses, and require a closer examination of the relation in which they stand to that important object of phrenic life.

The brain being considered as the proper organ of the mind, is not to be understood as a single *viscus*, but in reality a congeries of organs, each of them the seat of a particular mental power, one being appropriated to wonder, another to veneration, others to form, colour, &c., through the whole series—thus forming the seat of consciousness, and the centre to which all impressions made upon the nerves distributed over the body are conveyed, and from which the commands of the will are transmitted to put the various parts in motion.

“The mind sees through the medium of the eye, just as it thinks or feels through the medium of the brain, and as changes in the condition of the eye deteriorate or destroy the power of vision, without affecting the principle of mind, the obvious inference follows; in like manner may changes in the condition of the brain, destroy the power of feeling or of thinking, and yet, the mind or soul itself remain essentially the same.”\*

If the mind then manifests itself through the medium of material organs, its manifestations will be expressed with vigour, more or less, in proportion to the age, the health and activity of the expressing organ. That the brain is an assemblage of various organs, each of them the representative of a distinct and separate faculty, is verified by the fact, that one or more of the organs may be asleep or awake at the same time, or they may be diseased and healthy. If the brain were a single organ, it would be absolutely impossible for it to appear in such opposite states

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\* Observations on Mental Derangement.—Dr. Combe.

at one and the same time. The brain, like the other physical organs, is liable to be fatigued by exertion, and must find rest, and the organs, one after another, are locked within the soft embrace of sleep.

Nor do the delicate and fragile instruments of thought, feeling, and motion, lose their power, until the whole brain is overcome with the paralysis of sleep, thus affording a beautiful, and at the same time, a simple illustration of the phenomena of dreaming. The following singular dream, shows forcibly the successive waking of the mental organs.

“ Mr. S—— dreamt that he was in his parlour with a friend, and that a piece of black cloth was lying upon the table, but which his friend happened to remark was flesh-colour. Hereupon arose a discussion as to the colour of the cloth, Mr. S—— maintaining that it was black, and his friend as strenuously insisting that it was flesh-colour. The dispute became warm, and Mr. S—— offered to bet that it was black; his friend offering also to bet that it was flesh-colour. Mr. S—— concluded the bet, when his friend immediately exclaimed, ‘ And is not black the colour of more than half the human race?’ Thus completely stealing a march upon Mr. S——, and winning the bet. Mr. S—— declares that the idea of black being entitled to the name of flesh-colour had never before occurred to him. The extraordinary part of this dream is, that two operations were going on at the same time in the mind, the workings of the one apparently quite concealed from the other; for instance, the part of the brain which personated himself, had no knowledge whatever of the loop-hole which the part of the brain personating his friend had in reserve to close the argument. On the contrary, he says that he was utterly abashed by the remark, immediately thinking to himself, how foolish he was not to have been in possession of the idea !”\*

In this dream, we have a remarkable instance of two distinct series of reasoning going on simultaneously in the

mind of the dreamer ; of the thoughts and ideas of the one of whom, the other had no kind of conception, till they appeared to find utterance in words.

The following explanation of this dream is given in the work above referred to, which is perfectly satisfactory, and at the same time simple and natural.

“ The brain of the dreamer being entirely asleep, was beginning gradually to awake ; the organs of colour, form size, &c., were the first partially to emerge from their slumber ; hence arose the perception of the piece of cloth, which the mind immediately concludes to be of a certain colour. The next organ that begins to recover from its lethargy is combativeness ; immediately the mind figures to itself the presence of another person, who disputes the conclusion at which it had previously arrived. Then arises one of those discussions so graphically described in the extract above quoted, which ends in the defeat of its original opinion ; wit and secretiveness were next aroused, and being brought into activity, gave rise to the idea of the flesh-coloured cloth. Approbativeness is the last to shake off its torpor, and cause that feeling of shame to arise for his apparent defeat.” We have thus shortly adverted to the phenomena of dreaming, because we conceive it to have been one of the most fertile sources of a belief in the existence of spirits that haunted for good or evil purposes the sleeping hours of those in whose circumstances they felt an interest. But as we mean to enter more at large into this subject when we come to treat of visions, spectral illusions, superstitions, &c., we would only mention further in this place, that presentiments often result from a diseased state of the organs of mind, giving rise to a belief in familiar spirits, phantoms, &c., and leading the mind to the grossest superstition, and the most unreasonable fanaticism. These amply account for the almost universal belief in witchcrafts and sorceries, which so deeply mark the annals of every country of which we have any record.

The earliest records we have of man exhibit him as



putting implicit credence in the existence of supernatural beings, who held intercourse with men, and who, in many cases, exercised an uncontrollable power either for good or evil over their actions. From the writings of Moses we learn, that the Egyptian magicians were able, by their art, to perform deceptions before Pharaoh and his people, all but equal to the miracles which the prophet was exhibiting before the oppressors of the Hebrews. There cannot be a doubt, but that the great body of Egyptians would consider the powers possessed by their Magi, as being derived in a direct manner from the gods of their country, and would not fail to pay them that adoration which an ignorant people are ever ready to pay to those whom they consider as holding direct intercourse with the world of spirits. A casual glance will show to the most unreflecting mind, the great difference in which the magicians and sorcerers of the east were held in the days of the Pharaohs, with the supposed sorcerers or witches of our own country in the days of the celebrated Christian Shaw of Bargarran. In Egypt, wisdom was attached to their names, and riches and honours were heaped upon their heads; while in Scotland, in the days alluded to, they were not only shunned by their neighbours and friends, but in many cases were doomed to finish a miserable existence amid blazing faggots. This is easily accounted for; in the east, the Magi were generally the high priests of the national religion, and the deeper the mysteries in which they involved their religious rites, the more highly would their characters be enhanced in the eyes of their ignorant followers. Temples of the most imposing architecture were erected for their accommodation, and a wondering people listened with awe and trembling to their ambiguous prophesyings. Before Greece had acquired a name among the nations of the earth, Egypt had been for centuries the seat of learning and commerce. The gigantic ruins of temples which are so profusely scattered over its surface, from the Mediterranean to the confluence of the Blue and White rivers, sufficiently attest the at-

tachment of the Egyptians to their religion, and, consequently, the honours they would pay to their priests. The printing press had not then sent its light into the dwelling of the artisan, nor had philosophy taught him the harmony that existed in the apparent jarrings of the elements that surrounded him. Not so the Magi; their knowledge of astronomy and other branches of natural philosophy, enabled them to impose on the credulous multitude a belief in their more than human wisdom. Hence the belief in oracles, which so generally pervaded the East, and the deep reverence which a devoted people were ever ready to pay to a class of men whose actions were hidden in an impenetrable veil of mystery. If the Greeks profited by their intercourse with the Egyptians in learning and art, they also shared with them in their superstitions and their idolatries. If the god Apis was left to preside over the banks of the Nile, Jupiter, and the whole host of what is called the Grecian mythology, reigned on every hill and in every valley, from the Egean sea to the mountains of Macedon, and from the Hellespont to the shores of Italy. The writings of Homer and Hesiod, afford innumerable instances of the belief of the Greeks, at that early period of their history, in the intercourse of their gods with their sages and heroes. Succeeding poets and historians embellished their writings with fictions of the same description, and the chaining of Prometheus on a rock, the descent of Jupiter on Mount Ida, and the congregating of their deities on Olympus' top, were as firmly believed in, as that heat proceeded from the sun, or that darkness followed the setting of that luminary. The belief was so general, that Socrates himself, ascribed his superior wisdom to his attendant familiar spirit.

When the seat of empire was transferred from the shores of Greece to Rome, the gods of Olympus reigned paramount in the pantheon. If Homer sung of the gods and the heroes of his country, Virgil chalked out a new path of glory for the defeated Trojans whom the Greeks subdued, but still his deities were the deities of Greece.

As time rolled on, however, new deities were added to the crowded catalogue, and it was not till the pantheon was full, that a stop was put to the introduction of more. When the Roman power crumbled beneath its own weight, and the hordes of the north and the east burst like a vast avalanche on the fruitful soil of Italy, an empire which had established its laws and its religion from the centre of Asia to the island of Britain, and from the shores of Africa to the Baltic sea, was rent asunder by the poison of its own corruptions. With the hordes of the north came the superstitions and barbarities of the followers of Odin. The north of Europe, with its islands, had hitherto confessed his sway, and the remains of druidical temples, and detached fragments of the songs of ancient bards, abundantly testify the extent and duration of his religion. Not long after the destruction of the empire of the Cæsars, Christianity began to be heard of in Europe. The followers of Jupiter and Odin, alarmed at the progress of the new religion, lent all their influence to crush it in the bud. Tyrannical kings, and still more tyrannical priests, saw with alarm that the spread of the religion of Christ would be a death-blow to their interests and their corruptions. To put an end to their fears, they let loose a dis-solute and cruel soldiery upon a people who were promulgating a religion which was to raise man higher in the scale of rational and intelligent beings. But the blow of the persecutor is ever doomed to rebound on his own head. In spite of oppression and murder, Christianity continued to grow and to flourish. Crowned heads bent before it, and the august temples which had been erected to Jupiter and other gods of the Greeks, resounded to the halleluiahs of a purer religion.

After the establishment of Christianity in Europe, the Fathers of the church lent all their newly acquired influence to the overthrowing of the power of the priests of the Eleusinian Mysteries. For centuries that class of men had lorded it over the fairest portion of the civilised world, by means of their ambiguous oracles, and so tenacious were

they of the power they had usurped, that it was not till about the middle of the fourth century that it could be said to be at an end. Unhappily for mankind, and the progress of knowledge, the destruction of the ancient superstitions, was too soon followed by the introduction of superstitions of an equally, if not more revolting nature. The severe doctrines of the New Testament were hid from the great body of the people, and in their stead a mass of the most absurd oral lore was firmly implanted on their minds. Legends, which reason and common sense alike rejected, were listened to as oracles of truth, by those who had consigned the fanciful allegories of the Greeks to the volumes which were buried in their convents and their libraries. Relics of saints, or holy persons, were exhibited to an admiring multitude, who, laying aside their reason, put implicit credence in the power these things possessed in curing diseases, or averting impending calamities. It is a saying old as the days of Bacon, that "knowledge is power," and the priests of the period alluded to, appear to have been fully sensible of the truth of the apophthegm, and failed not to turn to good account the ignorance of their deluded followers. Miracles of the grossest description were performed before a people who flocked to those exhibitions with a fixed determination to believe whatever their priests chose to communicate.

The wealth derived from this source, and the power which it gave the priests over the minds of the people, induced them to extend their deceptions to such an extent, that powerful kings were compelled to do homage to a sect of men whose arms were superstition, whose rewards were heaven, and whose punishments were the pains of hell.

The civil power was soon aware that it was for its own interest to be on good terms with the priesthood, and accordingly a coalition was formed between them, having for its basis a complete command over the minds and persons of their miserable dupes. Bones of departed holy men, and fragments of their raiment, were sent into every

country in Europe, and pilgrimages to the places where they were enshrined, were continually adding to the riches of the impostors, who palmed their absurdities on unreflecting man.

Direct communications with the inhabitants of another world were sincerely believed in by the laity, and the priests, conscious of the importance such credulity gave them in the eyes of their fellow-men, were not backward in taking advantage of their devoted disciples. The adherents of the triple crown divided themselves into orders, each of which had its peculiar saints and miracles to bring forward as proofs of its divine origin. Those divisions tended materially to the overthrow of the power and influence of the Pope of Rome in many of the countries of Europe. Honours conferred on one order, were viewed with jealousy and distrust by every other, till at last Luther, a monk of the order of St. Francis, resenting the partiality of the Pope in conferring a privilege on an order which he thought belonged exclusively to his own, threw aside his allegiance, and, in defiance of Papal Bulls and the sword, established a system of religion, whence have sprung the various denominations now so profusely scattered over Europe and America.

Amid all these changes and turmoils, it may be reasonably asked, were mankind benefited? We are sorry to be obliged to answer, No. The ignorance of the great body of the people kept them in a state of complete vassalage to the lords of the soil, and the local superstitions which they had imbibed in their infancy, held an uncontrollable sway over their every action. Apparitions, supernatural visitations, evil eyes, and a thousand other chimerical phantasies, worthy of the most bigotted age, reigned paramount in the minds of the learned and the unlearned. Kings wrote books against those who held communications with the Devil, and learned judges condemned to death men who were arraigned for crimes which could exist only in a diseased imagination. The belief was so general, that in almost every civilized country, legalized

murders were committed for the imaginary crime of witchcraft.

In no country did the flame of witchcraft burn brighter, or were victims more easily procured for the sacrifice, than in our own. King James, whose extreme caution made him the dupe of superstitious fears, sullied his literary fame, and disgraced the period of his reign, not only by his writings on the subject of witchcraft, but by the severe enactments which he passed, compelling the prosecution and punishment of all suspected persons. These imprudent fears were gratified by the ready obedience of all classes of the community. Royal commissions were appointed in every part of the kingdom for the trial of suspected persons; and the clergy lent an eager hand, and were embued with a zeal that did not only rival, but surpass the malignity imputed to the unhappy objects of their suspicion. Convictions consequently followed in rapid succession, and numerous and cruel executions were exhibited, which had a powerful tendency in hardening the already callous feelings of the mob, and rendering them indifferent to the truth or falsehood of the statements made by their accusers. Of this we have a remarkable instance in the case of Christian Shaw, whose unhappy artifice was the occasion of seven individuals being condemned to the stake.



# THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITCHCRAFT.

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## SECTION I.

### THE BARGARRAN WITCHES.

THE names of those unfortunate individuals who fell sacrifices to the popular belief in witchcraft, as well as those whose artifice or credulity was the means of their conviction, are now fast sinking into oblivion, or at most are brought into view only for the purpose of embellishing the cabinet of the curious, or giving a visionary reality to the speculations of the antiquary. There are some names, however, more than others, destined to a posthumous fame, and which, amid the sterility of years, maintain a vigour and freshness, when all around them is withered and forgotten. Of this description is "Maggy Lang," the most celebrated of the seven unhappy individuals who suffered in the Gallowgreen of Paisley, for a crime which existed only in a diseased imagination. Tradition dwells upon her name with feelings, not of horror, but of respect, and mingles the tear of sympathy with the sadness of her tale. Her name is cherished by her descendants, and any trifling article which was once in her possession, is sought after with avidity, and proudly displayed by those into whose hands it has fallen. The most obvious reason we can advance for Maggie's celebrity is this—that she must have been a woman of superior attainments to the individuals with whom she suffered. It is to be lamented, indeed, that so little of her history is known prior to the time when she was charged with aiding and assisting in bewitching Christian Shaw of Bargarran;

but the singular circumstances which attended that case have induced us to commence with it. The extreme youth of the girl, the care which was taken to discover whether she was deceiving the spectators or not, and the sufferings, real or affected, which she endured, and which were witnessed by many respectable individuals, rank it among the most interesting witch cases on record. That a witch ever existed no man of common sense will for a moment believe, and yet a belief in witchcraft has been as general in the world, as any other opinion with which we are acquainted. Before such a belief, however, could find a place in the mind of man, his reason must have succumbed to his fears, and his ignorance of the apparently mysterious workings of Nature, made him an easy dupe to every visionary chimera incident to a weak or a diseased organization of mind.

Incapable of solving the various phenomena which he saw around him, man would naturally impute their existence to the agency of supernatural power, and consider every individual whose ways were not as his ways, as holding intercourse with beings which his own heated fancy had created.

There is one singular feature in the trials of many of those who were accused of witchcraft, namely, the arraigned in many cases confessing themselves guilty of the crimes laid to their charge. But if we take into consideration the imprisonments, the torturings, and the rigid examinations they were subjected to, we will not feel surprised that ignorant persons should have confessed themselves guilty of crimes which their judges, and their pastors in religious matters, insisted were clearly brought home to them. There is a case on record, in which an aged woman who had been arraigned for witchcraft, seriously asked her judge if it was possible for a person to be a witch and not know it. Could a person so utterly ignorant do otherwise, than confess to any thing which an artful judge would put to her?

The *Berwick Warder*, of Saturday 1st December, 1838, contains a long inquest held upon the body of a



child who had recently died in that neighbourhood, and the mother of which had voluntarily and repeatedly confessed that she was the murderer. It clearly appeared, however, on the examination of several witnesses, that the child had died a natural death, and that the mother had accused herself of the crime, in a fit of temporary insanity. In the course of the investigation, the following case was alluded to, in order to show that a confession of guilt from a person suspected of an atrocious crime, conclusive though such evidence may appear to be, is not invariably to be relied upon, especially where there is reason to suspect that insanity, in any of its modifications, exists in the accused party.

In the year 1721, one Lamb, residing in the town of Berwick, was charged with having, on his own confession, murdered his mistress, a woman of the name of Ferguson. This individual had for some time shown symptoms of a disordered imagination, having declared that he had been prompted by the Devil to murder the woman. Ferguson was, in reality, soon afterwards found murdered in her bed, a considerable sum of money having been also carried off. Lamb, on being informed of the circumstance, immediately declared himself to be the murderer, and was tried and executed accordingly, although, as no part of the property had been found in his possession, many persons disbelieved his statement, considering it only as the ravings of a diseased mind. Accordingly, an individual who had been convicted of other crimes, shortly afterwards confessed that he had committed the foul deed, for which the unfortunate man had suffered, thus exhibiting the true value of the former confession.

Still it is most singular, that a girl of eleven years of age could carry on a system of deception for so many weeks, without the apparent assistance of any individual whatever. Previous to her being seized with fits, she had quarrelled with some of the individuals whom she afterwards accused, as appearing to her during her ravings, and yet these persons were in the habit of paying occasional visits to Bargarran house in their *proper persons*—a thing far from being likely, if there had been the smallest truth in

the assertions of the infatuated girl. The supposed crime of witchcraft was held at that period, not only by the ignorant, but by the most learned lawyers in the land, in the greatest detestation, and the punishments awarded to those found guilty of it, were of the most severe description; yet, none of the individuals accused, took the precaution to remove themselves from their ordinary places of residence. It is matter of wonder, that it never entered the heads of the learned of that time, that, if individuals could go through the air on a broomstick, and be present in a company, and visible only to one of that company, they could not remove themselves from the myrmidons of the law at pleasure. If they bore malice in their hearts against all mankind who did not belong to their order, why did they not waylay the individuals charged with the warrant for their apprehension, and destroy both them and it? We have glowing descriptions in Milton of the tact and talent of the "Prince of the power of the air," but how miserably had he degenerated in the days of the notorious Christian Shaw, when seven of his devoted servants, assisted by himself, bent all their energies to the tormenting of an insignificant girl, who ultimately triumphed over them. Was this expressive of the power of him who led the

"Embattled seraphim to war?"

Yet, according to the credulity of the age, we find him leaguering himself with a few frail beings in a fruitless attempt on the life of a young and unhappy girl. The case is so extraordinary, that previous to entering more into detail, we consider it necessary to quote the following narrative, which is the only authenticated account we have of this singular affair.

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"The first edition of this Preface, Narrative, &c., was printed at Edinburgh, by James Watson in 1698, and entitled, 'True Narrative of the sufferings and relief of a Young Girl, who was strangely molested by evil spirits and their instruments in the west. Collected from authen-

tic testimonies, with a preface and postscript, containing reflections on what is most material or curious, either in the history or trial of the Seven Witches who were condemned and burnt in the Gallowgreen of Paisley.' ”

“Wise men do justly suspect, and are hardly brought to credit the accounts of extraordinary stories, especially anent witchcraft; because the frequent impostures which the Romanists have obtruded on the world in their miracles and legends; the many relations of odd things as done by demons or wizards, which yet were either false or the ground of simple natural causes; the ignorance of several judges and juries, who have condemned silly creatures merely upon their ridiculous confessions, or other slender proof; and the difficulty of conceiving the manner or philosophy of some operations and appearances, though undoubtedly true in fact, are good prejudices against a sudden belief, and precautions for an exact inquiry. But they are men of weak souls, destitute of distinct thoughts; who deny all, because they have discovered error in some, or condemn as false, all sects which they are ignorant how they came to exist: by the same rule of reasoning that there are no enthusiasts, because the best men have been sometimes mistaken for these; nor are there any criminals, in respect several have suffered who were not truly such, considering that many histories are fabulous, therefore none is to be trusted: And all the phenomena in nature, whose invisible causes they cannot comprehend, are mere delusions.

“The following narrative, as to the truth of fact, is the best attested piece of history of this kind, that has occurred in many ages; the most of the matters therein represented having gained the assent of private sceptics: and being proven before public judges, so that it is more surprising than the strange things of witchcraft, that any should seriously deny the being thereof, and from thence discredit such useful providences at a distance, when notoriety has dispelled all objections in the places where they did exist.

“Many authors have proven at large, that there are

witches and witchcraft, from reason, scripture, antiquity, and experience of all nations and ages in the world, and they have solved the difficulties which might obstruct the belief of this positive proof, by possible hypotheses of philosophy: where it is to be observed, that though any such explications of the natural manner of phenomena are subject to cavil, yet the existence of a thing which hath so certain positive evidence cannot be denied in sound reasoning; because angels and men not being made for civil converse together in this world, and all communion with devils being interdicted us, the Scripture needed to unfold little of their way of acting; and still the next age may discover what this could not reach, as this has already unveiled what was thought inextricable in the last, unless impossibility were presently demonstrated. Therefore such a short hint, as may somewhat illustrate the events in the subsequent discourse, may suffice in the present case; especially since Providence does, by eminent occurrences, rather design our practical instruction, than a subject of notional speculation.

“The Devil can assume a corporeal shape and bespeak man out of it: as he did to Eve, our Saviour, and in some heathen oracles: so that there is capacity for the entering into contract. Satan is willing thus to insure mortals of being enemies to heaven, earth, and their own salvation, by his indefatigable malice against all the three: as curiosity in wits, revenge, and disclosure of secrets in the great, covetousness in the worldling, or power and pleasure in all whom he thinks needful, (they being impregnable other ways,) and is permitted by God, to attack in this manner, does sufficiently blind them to be susceptible of his proposals thereanent. We see daily how criminal lusts inflamed by Satan, divert their horror, not only of eternal, but also of temporal eminent torments: perverting these instincts of nature which might fright them from surrender. But further, he does commonly facilitate his conquest on witches, by decoying them piecemeal to his lure, through the mediation of others from among mankind that are al-

ready embarked, till they be prepared, and he get an opportunity of making with them an explicit transaction.

“That accordingly Satan has *de facto* prevailed in making sorcerers and witches, appears from the testimony of the wisest and best in all states and times.

“The heathens, by nature and practice, discovering this truth, made laws against maleficos and mathematicos,\* (these last, though they assumed the name of an art much encouraged by the legislators; yet were known, under the cloak thereof, to consult the Devil anent the fates of men and states) which the Roman senate and people did execute; and even the Persians, in some good reigns, did the same. Under the Old Testament dispensation the magicians of Egypt and Babylon were baffled by Moses and Daniel; Balaam and the witch of Endor were baffled, just judgments were inflicted on Jezebel, Manassch, and the ten tribes for their sorceries and witchcrafts, amongst other crimes; and the laws made against such, as distinct from other guilt under the New Testament. Simon Magus, who bewitched the people of Samaria; Elymas the sorcerer, who was struck blind at Paul’s rebuke; the Pytho-nisse girl, who seems to have been possessed of consent, because she was not tormented, but got profit thereby; and such as confessed showed their deeds and burned their books in Ephesus; are undeniable instances of witchcraft. Finally, there are prophecies of false Christs, with signs and wonders, able to deceive, if possible, the very elect: general councils have made canons against these wretches; and the experimental knowledge of injured mortals, with the public sentences which did vindicate the same; in subsequent ages, are delivered down to us by the writers thereof. Hence, Gulielmus Linensis, a popish doctor, was justly put to death, even though he died penitent, he having confessed witchcraft, (whereof the written covenant was found in his pocket,) and that his share of the Devil’s service was to persuade and preach that witches were only silly de-

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\* “Witches and Mathematicians.”



luded melancholians, whereby their confessions were no proof. His success was such in this work of darkness, that the people and judges did slack, and witches were vastly multiplied in a few years, (*vid. Pet. Mamorius de Lamiis,*) who gives an account of the process from authentic records. Through these periods, it is observed, that Satan has oft shifted the scene, and turned himself to many shapes, as he found it most accommodating to his purposes: whereby the manner of apparition of devils has been different, according to the state of the times. So of old Satan appeared, and was worshipped as such, for deprecating his mischief, which is said to be retained in some of the most barbarous places of the Indies to this day.

“In the darkness of Popery the Devil was transformed into a more innocent spirit,\* in the brownies and fairies. These were then very frequent, he having impudence thus to appear openly, proportional to the knowledge of men, over whom his reign was so universal, as it is related to continue in the more northern regions at this day. But since light has broke out in our horizon, he oftener works externally by magicians and witches, and internally on the lusts of men, being now mostly restrained to his own sphere, or subjects. Yet still he ensnares several, partly, by aping the ordinances of God; especially as they are corrupted in the Romish church, whence so many monks and nuns as already prepared, have been found overcome. So he keeps with them public assemblies in the night of extraordinary merit. They formally worship him by many mimical gestures; he imprints on them a kind of sacrament; he inflicts dreadful penances on such as have not executed the commanded mischiefs; he teaches them odd words and signs, upon repeating of which exorcisms, he (it being his interest) effectuates the fore-pactioned operations, &c.

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\* “That pretended to foretel deaths, reveal the decease of absent persons, discover occult murder, and do other friendly offices, which were subtle means of inducing to him and relying on him.”

“ But though what he does of himself, or on the watch-word or ensign of sorcerers or witches, may, by collection, and artful disposal of matter and form, appear surprising; yet he cannot work against nature, or so apply actives to passives, as to overturn the course thereof; since that is only competent to its author, who alone can do true miracles, or know immediately the thoughts of man. Yea, after the fall it is like, that even Satan’s natural powers are come down below those of good angels; and it is certain, that he is often befooled in his designs by providence: notwithstanding whereof he retains so much as (being permitted) is sufficient to bring about, by unseen natural means, most of the extraordinary appearances, that the generality of the learned have attributed to him; and particularly those in the subsequent narrative: many of which, though they are beyond the efficiency of disease, deceit, or any visible cause; yet may be the effects of some such unperceived means as follow.

“ There is no difficulty in Satan’s transmitting in a short time an account of things which are past; since it is known he goes to and fro in the earth: yea, he may have certainly foretold some future events, as Alexander’s success against Persia, &c., seeing he understands and may steal the great revolutions of the world, out of the prophets; wherein they are so graphically circumscribed; or he may discover his own resolutions whenever he is commissioned or permitted to execute a judgment; which is the case of those whom for seeking their horoscopes, God gives over to him to whom they do apply; and of Saul, who got so exact an account of his own end by the Philistines. But without some such aid, Satan can only guess like the physician by the urine, or politician by the crisis of states, which is the cause that most of his oracles are ambiguous.

“ His transporting of witches is elsewhere explained. He can raise hurricanes, as appears in Job, which are known to carry over tracks of sea and land, very ponderous bodies; as it is easy for him to condense a part of the

vehicle, which may protect the breathing, and yet cut the air, like the fence of dyvers, and beak of a sloop; in which also he affects the magnifying of his natural powers to be no less than of good angels, who transported Ezekiel and Elijah. His covering of the witches from sight, at some times, is also cleared from the difficulties which seem to attend it, in another place, where it appears very possible that his skill in optics, reflection and refraction of light, &c., to which his power and agility as a spirit subministrates materials, may effectuate all that can be proven to be true fact in the case.

“ But Glanvil, More, and others, lay another hypothesis in both, viz.: That the soul is separable from the body in some cases, without death: when by God’s permission, Satan, of the parties’ consent, gets power over soul and body; whereby he may carry away the one from the helm of the other, and set it back again in its seat; providing the vital spirits which make the body a fit receptacle, be well preserved by ointments, that constrict the pores till the return of its guest; but death ensues from a separation, when the organs of the body are rendered altogether unapt to obey the soul’s commands in its functions. If such an opinion could be true, Satan might place this captivated spirit to actuate any shape he thinks fit. But there needs not so much metaphysics to unriddle the appearances of witches, as beasts and the like; since their real persons may be covered with a vehicle, which by disposal of the rays coming therefrom, may fascinate the eyes by the same impressions that come from the true sight of such. His power of representing another thing in lieu of that which is truly present, is so certain that it is found he may make up the image of persons who are not present at all. For it is undoubted that spiritual devils may sometimes be permitted to represent by phantoms the most innocent and praise-worthy men, as devils incarnate do traduce them. He that accuseth the brethren and imitates an angel of light, may likewise personate the children of light by his delusions; yet the antecedents,



concomitants, and consequents, of such providences, do readily propale the falsehood, so as the just man, for the most part, shall not perish in his righteousness, and God, in his ordinary providence, will not laugh at the trial of the innocent, though sometimes it fall out, that the sons of Belial may swear away the life of an innocent Naboth.

“ There are several other things of less difficult explanation. Particularly the Devil, or witches, might have been heard in converse by the maid, and not by others, the same way as a sound directed through a speaking trumpet, does reach the ears to which it is aimed, without dispersing towards the intermediate that are not in a straight line betwixt. The confederated devil, may, upon the witches’ desire, infuse poisonous humours, extracted from herbs of the same invisible operation with the steam of mad dogs, or the pestilence; which being joined to the rapidous course of the patient’s own spirits, humours, and blood, that Satan, by ingyring himself thereunto, may, through the natural means of pulsion, set in career, can very well produce these extraordinary motions which are mentioned in the following account. They delight much in the torture and destruction of young children, in envy of Christ, who is tender of such little ones; and because the crime is the greater the less the patient has offended, or can resist. They use, or make others to repeat scripture words for gaining credit, or alleviating the terror, or to disgrace the word, by such a mock use, as they did in the time of our Saviour, and therefore their testimony was rebutted. It is observable from many passages that he hastens sometimes, and effects their discovery, by his malice against their present temporal enjoyments, uncertainty of their continuance; and insatiable desire for their full wreck. Yet some of them, who are most maliciously bent, he thinks fit to keep here, as useful instruments; and providence permits others to live, that they, wilfully filling up their measure, under means, may be finally inexcusable.

“ As to those, whom in secret judgment, the Devil is

permitted to torment: but, in mercy, not to overcome: he may be carried thereunto from his design of perverting them by terror, whereof he is at last disappointed. And however, the defacing of God's image, and especially in despite of Jesus Christ, who honoured that nature by assuming it, is his chief delight: or he is constrained to make such stupendous appearances against his will (because he is most successful when he is least known) for a visible testimony superadded to the greater gospel proofs, in gross times, that there are spirits and a Devil to torment them, as it is observable that this was denied by Mr. Aikenhead (though he died in full conviction thereof) at the time when these things fell out in the country. Or providence may tolerate such sufferings, that they though intended by the Devil for an instance of malice, may, by their notoriety, be a mean of moving the discovery, and bringing to justice these miscreants, whom he made use of as his instruments in them: and who may have lived long in rebellion against heaven, and destruction of mankind, by malefices of the same sort, which fell out in this case. Finally, the abundant and efficacious grace of God is conspicuous in enabling a young girl to resist to the utmost, the best laid assaults of the Evil One, as it is certain that he shows the greatest malice in countries where he is hated and hateth most, and the nearer his reign be to an end.

“There are many other profitable instructions which arise from this wonderful providence, for such dispensations have their own language, and the man of wisdom shall see God's name.

“The usages of charms for men or beasts, certain characters, words, verses, and spells; the observation of times and seasons as lucky, or unlucky; the belief of having success by carrying about some herbs, plants, or branches of trees, and many the like superstitions, which can have no natural casualty on the effects desired, are the very rudiments of witchcraft, and an implicit application to the Devil for virtues which God has denied to things; whence they are to be abhorred as sinful in themselves and intro-

ductory to explicit engagement. So gross ignorance, profane looseness, stupid forgetfulness of God, and neglect of his worship in closets and families; malice, envy, revenge, discontent, oppressive fear of want, and distrustful anxiety of spirit, finally, a libidinous temper, curses, imprecations, and sinful curiosity, are to be evited as paving the way to the same mischief.

“Let none inveigh against a profession of religion, because some under that specious covert have been found in league with the Devil. It is because of the glorious lustre and excellency of our holy faith, that these miscreants paint themselves with it, whereby likewise they may be less suspected, and more able, subtly to gain on others, and do their master’s work. So it was no stain on the apostles that one of their number had a devil, was a traitor and cheat; nor that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, of design that the good ways of the Lord may be evil spoken of. Neither let us be under a slavish fear and terror of that hellish tribe, in truckling to their humour, least they should do harm, which savours of worshipping and paying homage to the Devil; whereas we ought only to make the Lord of hosts our fear and our dread.

“There is no just ground to reflect on particular persons or families, upon account of such troubles. For no man knoweth either love or hatred by all that’s before them. All things come alike to all. And suppose ye that these were sinners above all the Galileans, or above all that dwelt in Jerusalem? The infinite wise God may thus try faith, patience, and Christian fortitude. Job and our Saviour were assaulted; and seven devils cast out of Mary Magdalene, a chosen vessel unto the Lord. A daughter of Abraham’s was bound by Satan eighteen years; and his messenger was sent to buffet the great apostle of the Gentiles. The woman of Canaan, Matth. xv. 22, and the godly man, Mark ix. 24, had their nearest relations vexed in this manner; and blessed be the Lord that has left such instances on record for prevention of stumbling. Though it must be confessed that the same charity which

judges well of all things, cannot but alter its remark, when its proof is sufficiently clear from the way in which the person affected did formerly walk, since presumptions do always accede to truth, and lawyers have a maxim, that *in re clara non est locus conjecturis*.\*

“These things may meet with a very different reception, especially in this unhappy age and place of the world, where Britain may be termed the unfortunate island; Afric never having been more fertile in the production of monsters; since 'tis observed that through all the successions of men, there was never before, any society or collective body of atheists, till these dregs of time; though there might have been here and there some misshapen births. But wisdom is justified of her children, and 'tis the season of Samson to awake when Delilah gives the alarm, that the Philistines are upon him. What, peace! so long as the whoredoms of Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? But good things are hoped of our magistrates, who have already so happily begun.

“The apostle said of Job's trials, ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord. So, in this narrative you have a deplorable scheme of this maid's formidable fits, and of the powers of darkness that combined, not only for ruining her body, but also for murdering her soul. In the mean time, the hearts of many were bleeding for her, and much application was made to God in her behalf. Divers solemn fasts were observed, both in her father's family, in the parish, and throughout the bounds of the presbytery, and elsewhere; her case was expressly minded in public addresses to the throne of grace; till at length there was a general fast religiously kept in most parts of the Synod, that God might give an effectual check to Satan's rage and dominion in the country. Boasting of prayers is to be abhorred, yet it is our duty, with all gratitude, to acknowledge God the hearer, and to proclaim to the world, the excellency of them, upon this

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\* “In this case it is evident the thing is not a conjecture.”

very occasion : For he hath not turned away his ear from us, it being the comfortable result of this history, that the girl hath been perfectly well for many months : and is not this a brand plucked out of the fire ; and have not the splinters wherewith the witches thought to have destroyed her, recoiled back upon some of themselves, and we wait execution of justice on the rest.

“The Devil could not enter the herd of swine, nor touch one hair of Job’s head, without permission from him whose kingdom ruleth over all : whence, though our enemies be very indefatigable and invisible, yet we are under the conduct of the watchman who neither slumbers nor sleeps ; to whom darkness and light are both alike ; and greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world. So that unless we wilfully forfeit our privileges, there is no fear of counterpoising the wicked ones, throwing down the gauntlet to all their projects or machinations, since neither angels, principalities, nor powers, shall be able to separate us from the love which is in Christ Jesus our Lord ; and though no argument can be drawn from any merit in us, yet we’ll carry the day against all the militia of hell under the captain of our salvation, since he will rest in his own love. Is this the manner of man, O Lord God ? yet a little while the Devil and his accomplices will be cast into the bottomless pit, and we transported into Immanuel’s land.

“It will not be a natural sturdiness of temper, nor a lifeless mentioning of the name of God or Christ, that can shelter us from those devourers, as appears in the seven sons of Sceva, Acts xix., but if the Lord be God, then follow him ; for who is he that will harm you if ye be followers of that which is good ; he will give his angels charge of thee to keep thee in all thy ways. Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them. And they wrestle most successfully against principalities and powers, who fight upon their knees, as resisting of the Devil is the way to make him flee from us.



“ Yet whom Satan cannot obtain to be tortured hereafter, he will (when permitted) torment in this side of time; hence, if possession of bodies be so great a plague, how much worse is it to have him reign master of our souls? Wherefore let us watch and pray against every sin, the least of which is more pleasing to him and worse to us than the being so corporally tormented.

“ If Satan, as a spirit, may insinuate himself into our humours, no wonder that by having such advantage in the temper, he can influence the phlegmatic to sloth, the choleric to anger, the sanguine to lust and sinful pleasure, the melancholic to despair, &c. So they who think that they stand, have need to take heed lest they fall, and to pray that the watchman of Israel may make an hedge about them and their house, and about all that they have on every side.

“ Let this not only rouse our diligence and stir up our gratitude for not being affected alike: but let it recal our admiration and love of Jesus Christ, who hath freed our souls and bodies from the power and slavery of Satan; and finding ourselves too weak for him, in awarding these deluding pleasures which procure our being deserted by God, and are Satan's baits to this fearful thralldom; let us run to the Rock of Ages for protection and support, our sufficiency being only of God.

“ Seeing there are witches and devils, there are also immortal souls of the first, since the last do contract for them, and take such pains to retain them; so that the Sadducees, though they have a judicial blindness in their reason, are hereby rendered inexcusable by very sense. Evil books which stir up and ensnare curious fancies, that are seldom accompanied with accurate judgments, (the soul's looking outward diverting it from diving into the depths of truth) are to be restrained; and also such ridiculous pamphlets, as no doubt, by the instigation of Satan, have lately been sent abroad, of design to frustrate any good use which might be made of such rare providences, as are contained in the ensuing narrative, by forgiving others, or disguising this.



"This has been delayed so long to be published, partly that there might be the more narrow scrutiny made into the matters of fact; and partly, by some accidents which did retard it. In it the reader is not to expect any accuracy of style, because the designed shortness did occasion the wrapping up of much matter in small bounds, and the punctual exactness of truth in every circumstance was the chief aim, so that other defects ought to be the less quarrelled."

"It was about the end of August, 1696, when the first rise and occasion was given, (so far as can be known) to these strange things that befel the child, who is the subject of this narrative, and the manner was thus:

"Christian Shaw, daughter to a gentleman of good account, called John Shaw, laird of Bargarran,\* in the parish of Erskine, within the shire of Renfrew: a smart lively girl, and of good inclinations, about eleven years of age, perceiving one of the maids of the house, named Katherine Campbell, to steal and drink some milk, she told her mother of it; whereupon the maid Campbell (being a young woman of a proud and revengeful temper, and much addicted to cursing and swearing upon any light occasion, and otherwise given to purloining,) did, in a most hideous rage, thrice imprecate the curse of God upon the child; and at the same time did thrice utter these horrid words, 'The Devil harle (that is, drag) your soul through hell. This passed upon Monday, August 17th, in presence of several witnesses, who afterwards made evidence of it.

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\* "A little towards the south from the castle of Erskine, stands the house of Bargarran, the seat of John Shaw of Bargarran, whose ancestors, for nigh three hundred years, have possessed these lands, and derive their descent from a younger brother of the family of Sauchie, now represented by Sir John Shaw of Greenock, (anno 1697.) The intermarriages of this house have been with some of the most considerable gentry of this country—as the families of Kelsoeland, Mains, Raiss, Woodhead, Glorat, Livingstone of Haining, Craigends, and Northbar.'"—*Crawford's History of the Shire of Renfrew.*

“Upon the Friday following, being August 21st, about sun-rising, one Agnes Naismith, an old widow woman, ignorant, and of a malicious disposition, addicted to threatenings, (which sometimes were observed to be followed with fatal events,) who lived in the neighbourhood, came to Bargarran’s house; where finding the child, Christian, in the court with her younger sister, she asked how the lady and young child did, and how old the young sucking child was; to which Christian replied, what do I know? - Then Agnes asked, how herself did, and how old she was; to which she answered, that she was well, and in the eleventh year of her age.

“On the Saturday night thereafter, being Aug. 22, the child went to bed in good health; but so soon as she fell asleep, began to struggle and cry, Help, help! and then suddenly got up, and did fly over the top of a resting bed, where she was lying, (her father, mother, and others being in the room, and to their great astonishment and admiration) with such violence, that probably her brains had been dashed out, if a woman, providentially standing by, and supported by a door at her back, had not broke the force of the child’s motion; who being laid in another bed, remained stiff and insensible as if she had been dead, for the space of half an hour; but for forty-eight hours thereafter, could not sleep, crying out of violent pains through her whole body, and no sooner began to sleep, or turn drowsy, but seemed greatly affrighted, crying still, Help, help.

“After this the pain fixed in her left side, and her body was often so bent and rigid, as she stood like a bow on her feet and neck at once, and continued without power of speech, except in some short intervals, for eight days; during which time, she had scarce half an hour’s intermission together, the fits taking her suddenly, and both coming on and going off by a swerff, or short deliquium, but appeared perfectly well and sensible in the intervals.

“But about the middle of September, her fits returned in a manner differing from the former, wherein she seemed

to fight and struggle with something that was invisible to spectators, and her action appeared as if she had been defending herself from some who were assaulting or attempting to hurt her, and this with such force that four strong men were scarcely able to hold her; and when any of the people touched any part of her body, she did cry and screech with such vehemence, as if they had been killing her, but could not speak.

"Before this time, as she was seized with the trouble, her parents had called for physicians from Paisley, viz.: John White, apothecary, a near relation, and afterwards Dr. Johnstone, who took blood, and applied several things, both at first and afterwards, without any discernible effect upon the patient, either to the better or worse: and she all the while of these latter fits being afflicted with extraordinary risings and fallings of her belly, like the motion of a pair of bellows! and such strange movings of her body, as made the whole bed she lay on shake, to the great consternation of spectators.

"Some days thereafter was an alteration in her fits, so far, that she got speaking during the time of them; and when she was in the fits, fell a crying, that Katherine Campbell and Agnes Naismith were cutting her side, and other parts of her body; which parts were in that time violently tormented. And when the fit was over, she still averred, that she had seen the same persons, doing the same things which she complained of, while under the fit, (it being remarkable that in the intervals she was still as well and sensible as ever,) and would not believe but that others present saw them as well as she! In this condition she continued with some, but not very considerable variation, either as to the fits or intervals, for the space of a month.

"After which time she was conveyed to Glasgow, where Dr. Brisbane,\* a physician deservedly famed for

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\* "The son of the Reverend Divine, Mr. Matthew Brisbane, Parson of Erskine, who was descended from the Brisbanes of Bishopton."—*Crawford's History of the Shire of Renfrew.*

skill and experience, did by Mr. Henry Marshall, apothecary, apply medicine to her; after which, having staid in Glasgow about ten days, and being brought home to the country, she had near a fortnight's intermission. But then her fits returned, with this difference, that she knew when they were coming, by a pain in her left side, which she felt before they came, and in these fits, her throat was prodigiously drawn down towards her breast, and her tongue back into her throat; her whole body becoming stiff and extended, as a dead corpse, without sense or motion; and sometimes her tongue was drawn out of her mouth over her chin to a wonderful length, her teeth setting together so fast upon it, that those present were forced to thrust something betwixt her teeth, for saving her tongue. And it was oft observed that her tongue was thus tortured when she essayed to pray. And in this condition she was for some time, with sensible intervals wherein she had perfect health, and could give a full account of what she was heard to utter while in the fit.

“For several days these fits continuing with some variation, her parents resolved to return her to Glasgow, that she might there have the more conveniency of being under the doctor's oversight and care, for further discerning the nature of her trouble, and making use of the most probable natural remedies. But being on her way to her grandmother's house at Northbar, she did thrust or spit out of her mouth parcels of hair, some curled, some plaited, some knotted, of different colours, and in large quantities; and thus she continued to do in several swooning fits every quarter of an hour, both in her passage to Glasgow, which was by boat on Thursday, Nov. 12th; and when she was in Glasgow, for the space of three days ensuing, she put frequently hair out of her mouth, and in as great quantities as the first day; her former swerffing or swooning fits recurring as often throughout the days as before: and thereafter from Monday to Thursday following, she put out of her mouth coal cinders about the bigness of chest-nuts, some whereof were so hot that they could scarcely

be handled, one of which, Dr. Brisbane being by her when she took it out of her mouth, felt to be hotter than the heat of any one's body could make it. Then for the space of two days, in these swooning fits, as formerly, there was put, or taken out of her mouth, straw in great quantities, though but one straw at once folded up together, which when put out returned to its length, was found to be both long and broad, and it was remarkable that in one of them there was a little small pin found. Thereafter were put out of her mouth, bones of various sorts and sizes, as bones of fowls, and small bones of the heads of kine, and then some small sticks of candle fir, (a sort of fir in the country, that burns like candle,) one of which was about three or four inches long; which, when any one upon sight of either bones or sticks took hold of to pull out, they found them either held by her teeth set together upon them, or forcibly drawn back into her throat; particularly Archibald Bannatyne, of Kellie younger, observing a bone in her mouth like a duck shank or leg bone, and essaying to pull it out, he declared, he found something drawing it back into her throat; so that it took a deal of force to get it pulled out. It is to be noticed, that she never knew how these things were brought into her mouth, and when they were got out of it, she immediately recovered of her fit for that time.

“After this, she put out of her mouth some quantity of unclean hay intermixed with dung, as if it had been taken out of a dunghill, which was so stinking, that the damsel could not endure the nauseating taste and vile relish those things produced in her mouth, which did necessitate her still to rinse her mouth with water, after the putting of that sort of matter out of it. Then for more than a day's space, she put out of her mouth a number of wild fowls' feathers; after that a gravel-stone, which in the judgment of beholders, had been passed by some persons in a gravel fit, with some small white stones, and a whole nut gall, (wherewith they use to dye and to make ink,) together with lumps of candle grease, and egg shells; during which



time, she continued as formerly in her recurring swooning fits, with some intervals wherein she was in perfect health: of all which there were many famous witnesses, who in that city, (besides those who were continually with her) came frequently to visit her.

“ It is to be noticed, that the damsel at the time of the putting out of her mouth the sticks above-mentioned, being in bed about eight o’clock at night, told she was to be grievously tormented with sore fits at night, which accordingly fell out; for a little thereafter, she fell into a long swoon, wherein she had no use of any sense, either of hearing, seeing, or feeling; so as though oftentimes the beholders called to her with a loud voice, moving also and tossing her body, all was to no purpose, and when the Laird of Kellie younger, above-named, to try the truth, gave her a very sore pinch in the arm, she had no sense of it in the time. After recovery from the swoon, but yet continuing in the fit, she fell a reasoning with Katherine Campbell after this manner: ‘ Thou sittest there with a stick in thy hand to put in my mouth, but through God’s strength thou shalt not get leave: thou art permitted to torment me, but I trust in God thou shalt never get my life, though it is my life thou designest.’ (And at that time calling for a bible and candle,) said, ‘ come near me, Katie, and I’ll let thee see where a godly man was given up to Satan to be tormented, but God kept his life in his own hand; and so I trust in God thou shalt never get my life, and all that thou shalt be permitted to do unto me, I hope through God’s mercy shall turn to my advantage. This man was robbed of all, and tormented in body, and had nothing left him but an ill wife. Come near me, Katie, and I’ll read it to thee. And reading that passage of Job, when she came to the place where his wife said unto him, Curse God and die! the damsel considering these words a little, said, O! what a wife has this been, that bids her goodman curse God and die? she who should have been a comfort to him in his trouble, turned a cross to him?’ Then after reading of the chapter to the end,



she looks towards the foot of the bed and said, 'Now Katie, what thinkest thou of that? thou seest for all the power the Devil got over Job, he gained no ground on him; and I hope he shall gain as little on me. Thy master the Devil deceives thee; he is a bad master whom thou servest, and thou shalt find it to thy smart, except thou repent before thou die. There is no repentance to be had after death. I'll let thee see, Katie, there is no repentance in hell.' And turning over the book, citing Luke, chap. xvi. near the latter end thereof, and reading the same over, said, 'Katie, thou seest there is no repentance in hell, for this rich man besought Abraham to testify to his five brethren, that they come not to the place of torment, where he was, but repent and turn to the Lord, for there is no winning out, if once they come there; now, Katie, thou heard this, what thinkest thou of it? I'll let thee hear another place which should pierce thy very heart, and turning over the book, said she would read about Adam and Eve; thou knowest, Katie, the serpent, the Devil, thy master, thought to have ruined mankind at the beginning, his malice was so great at that blessed state wherein they were then, seeing himself cast down from all hopes of mercy, used all means possible for him to subvert their happiness, by suggesting to them fair promises, and a prospect of advantage to them before their eyes, in causing them to eat that forbidden fruit, whereby they and their posterity fell from that estate wherein they were, and were made subject to God's curse for ever: but God did not suffer them to be at this stance, but of his infinite mercy shewed them a better way, whereby they might have life eternal by revealing to them that blessed promise, The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent. Now, Katie, what thinkest thou of that promise? but have mind of this, thou'lt get no advantage by it, 'tis not made to thee, who hast renounced God's service, and taken on with the Devil, thou art his slave, thou deniedst this, but I know thou art a hypocrite; for I remember, when thou wast in my mother's house, thou

bought a catechism upon a pretence to learn to read, to cloak thy sin: Wilt thou hear me, knowest thou the reward of the hypocrite? I'll let thee hear it; remember Mr William Gillies was lecturing the other day upon the xxiii. of Matthew, where many a woe is pronounced against the hypocrite, eight dreadful woes here, Katie, and some of them belong to thee; but I'll tell thee more, knowest thou the reward of the hypocrite; they shall be cast into the lake that burns for ever, that's their portion; dost thou hear this now? thou turnest thy back to me, when I am telling the truth; if I were reading a story-book, or telling a tale to thee, thou wouldst hear that. Remember it will be thy portion too, if thou do not repent, and confess, and seek mercy.' Again, turning over the book, she read about Pilate, saying, 'Pilate he made a shew of cleansing himself of Christ's blood, he washed his hands and declared himself innocent; but for all his washing, he had a foul heart; he would not lose his office for the saving of Christ's life; he knew well enough that Christ was an innocent person; but he preferred his honour before Christ; therefore to please the Jews, and to quench the struggling in his conscience, he washed his hands, and then delivered Christ to be crucified by them.' Thus she continued for more than two hours' space; reasoning at this rate, and exhorting her to repent, quoting many places of Scripture through the Revelation and Evangelists. And when any offered to pull her bible from her, she uttered horrid screechs and outcries, saying, 'she would never part with her bible as long as she lived, she would keep it in spite of all the devils.'

Before we pass from this, it will be needful to give the reader advertisement of some things. 1. That while she called for her bible and a candle, she neither heard nor saw any of those persons who were then actually and discernibly present in the room with her, and that Katherine Campbell, to whom she directed her speech was not discernibly present to any other body but herself. And the pinch she got in her insensible fit, she found and

complained of the pain of it in that part afterward, but knew not how she came by it, nor blamed any of her tormentors for it. 2. That these words set down as spoken by her were the very same both for words and order as nearly as they could be gathered and remembered by the hearers without any addition of their own. 3. That although she was a girl of a pregnant spirit above her age, and had much of the Scriptures, and withal had pretty good understanding, above what might be expected of one of her years, of the fundamental principles of religion taught in the catechisms; yet we doubt not in so strong a combat, the Lord did by his good Spirit graciously afford her a more than ordinary measure of assistance, both now and at other times in the like debates.

“Sometime after the putting out of her mouth the trash above-mentioned, she fell into extremely violent fits, with lamentable crying; four persons being hardly able to withhold her from climbing up the walls of the chamber, or from otherways doing herself hurt, meantime having no power of speech while in the fit, but her back and the rest of her body grievously pained, in which condition she continued four or five days with the usual sensible intervals, in which she declared, that four men, Alexander and James Andersons, and other two, of whom she gave particular and exact marks, but knew not their names, were tormenting her. It was observed that many of these she named were known to be persons of ill fame, as these two persons last named were. It is also remarkable that for some time she knew not the name of the said Alexander Henderson, till one day he came a-begging to the door of the house, where the damsel was, whom she seeing, immediately cried out, ‘that was he whom she had seen among the crew.’

“After this she fell into other fits, wherein she saw the forenamed persons with some others, and heard and saw several things that past among them. Particularly, she sometimes told when she was to take the fits, how often she would take them, (which fell out accordingly,) with

some discourse that were among them relating to herself and others.

“About the eighth of December, being brought home again from Glasgow, and having had six or seven days’ respite from her fits, she afterwards fell into frightful and terrifying fits; the occasion whereof she declared to be, her seeing the Devil in prodigious and horrid shapes, threatening to devour her, and then she would fall dead and stiff with all the parts of her body distended and stretched out as a corpse without sense or motion, which fits as they came suddenly on without her knowledge, so she did as suddenly recover and grew perfectly well; and they usually came on when she essayed to pray. In which time also other fits took her more sensibly, she knowing when they were a-coming, how long they would continue, and when they would return; in which fits her eyes strangely altered, and turned in her head to the admiration of spectators, with a continual painful working about her heart, sometimes her joints were complicate and drawn together, and her forehead drawn forcibly about toward her shoulders; which fits she took by first falling into a swoon, and after her violent fits, instantly recovered after the same manner. During this time, the fits altered again as to their times of coming and continuance; in which she sometimes endeavoured to bite her own fingers, or any thing else that came in her way, also when she saw the persons before-mentioned, one or two of them about her, pointing them out to the persons present with her, though by them unseen, and sometimes declaring that she had hold of them by their cloaths, particularly, December 17, she being in a sore fit, she cried out of several persons that were tormenting her; and being in the bed, grasped with her hands towards the foot of it, and cried out that she had got a grip of the sleeves of one J. P.’s jerkin (or jacket) which was, as she said, duddie, (that is, ragged or tattered) at the elbows: and at that very instant, the damsel’s mother and aunt heard the sound of the rending or tearing of a cloth, but saw or felt nothing, only

found in each of the damsel's hands, which were fast closed, when they got them opened, a bit of red cloth, looking as torn off a garment; of which kind of cloth there had been none in the room at that time, nor in the whole house, nor near it that any knew of. Another particular she told, was, that there was such an one among the crew going to prick her tongue, which thereupon was instantly pulled back into her throat, she lying dumb for a considerable space. Sometimes upon her recovery from her fits, she told that she heard several things spoken and communed among her afflictors, but durst not make them known; because they threatened to torment her after this, or the other manner, if she should make them known, and accordingly, when, by her mother or others, she was prevailed with to begin to tell them, instantly the torment fell out as was threatened. She told further, that her tormentors appeared to her usually with lights and strange sorts of candles, which were frightful for her to look to them.

“ Thus she continued till the first of January 1697, not only in the fits fore-mentioned with some alterations, but fell likewise by swooning, into light fits, wherein she continued about two or three hours together, sometimes more, sometimes less, with very short intervals, in which fits she did not much complain of pain; but had a great palpitation in her breast, and sometimes in other parts of her body, strange and unaccountable motions, which continued in a greater or lesser degree, during the whole time of the fit, wherein she was somewhat light, and not so solid in her mind as at other times, though in the intervals of these, as of all other fits, she was sufficiently composed; which fits as all the rest, came suddenly on, and went as suddenly off by a swoon or swerf.

“ Before we proceed farther in the relation, let it be noticed, first, that the foresaid Agnes Naismith, being brought by the parents a second time to see the damsel, did, (though not desired) pray for her, *viz.* ‘ That the Lord God of heaven and earth might send the damsel her

health, and try out the verity:’ after which, the damsel declared that though the said Agnes had formerly been very troublesome to her, yet, from that time forth, she did no more appear to her, as her tormentor, but on the contrary, as she apprehended, defending her from the fury of the rest. 2. It is further here to be noticed, that the fore-named Katherine Campbell, could by no means be prevailed with to pray for the damsel, but upon the contrary, when desired by some, cursed them, and all the family of Bargarran, and in particular, the damsel and all that belonged to her, withal adding this grievous imprecation, ‘ The devil let her never grow better, nor any concerned in her, be in a better condition than she was in, for what they had done to her.’ Which words she spoke before several famous witnesses. 3. That Bargarran having prevailed with the Sheriff Depute of the Shire, to imprison the said Katherine Campbell, she from the time of her imprisonment, never appeared to the damsel, (though formerly she had ordinarily appeared as one of her most violent tormentors) except once or twice, at which times, it was found upon after inquiry, that she was not in the Tolbooth, but either in the jailor’s house, or had liberty granted her to go out to church. 4. That at the time when the damsel did put out of her mouth the hair and other trash, as above related, Katherine Campbell being taken into custody, there was found in her pocket a ball of hair of several colours, which was afterwards thrown into the fire, after which time the damsel put no more hair out of her mouth. And it is to be further noticed, that she said, she heard among the crew, when tormenting her, that Katherine Campbell made that ball of hair found in her pocket, of the hair of the damsel’s head which had been cut when her trouble began, and which did agree in colour, &c., when compared.

“ Upon the first day of January, about ten o’clock at night, she fell by swoonings into fits differing from the former, in that after the swooning fit was over, she lay quiet, as if she had been dead, making no motion at all with her



body in the bed; yet at the same time those present heard her mournful talking, but with a low and hardly audible voice, and repeating several stories in metre, which they thought to be expressions of the rise and progress of her own trouble; and thus she continued, (still withal naming some of the forementioned persons) till her parents and others offered to rouse her, by touching and moving her body; whereupon instantly she uttered horrid screeches, and cried as if she had been pierced through with swords, and assaulted for her life; after which she fell a singing, leaping, and dancing for a long time, laughing with a loud voice, in an unusual manner, tearing down the hangings of the bed, and pulling off her head-cloaths and neck-cloaths; in which extravagancies she was acted with such a force and strength, that her father and minister, though joining their whole strength together, could not get her dancing and leaping hindered. But after prayer, the minister finding her composed, inquired if she remembered what she had done in time of the fit; to which she replied, That she distinctly remembered her miscarriages, and in special her singing and dancing, saying withal, that the witches inclosing her in a ring, (or circle,) and dancing and singing about her, was the occasion of her dancing, which she then gladly performed with the rest. For some days after she had fits after this manner, with some variation; in one of which fits, as she was tearing off her head-dress cloaths, her parents resolving to see what would be the event, did make no hindrance to her; whereupon she stript herself of all her cloaths, that were upon her, not leaving so much as her smock upon her body, if that had been permitted.

“After this, toward or about the 11th January, she fell into fits different from the former, in which she was suddenly carried away from her parents and others that were about her, with a sudden flight, and in the first of these (to their great amazement) through the chamber and hall, down a long winding stair toward the tower-gate, with such a swift and unaccountable motion, that it was

not in the power of any to prevent her, her feet not touching the ground, so far as any of the beholders could discern, being heard in her motion to laugh in an unusual manner; but by divine providence, the gate being shut, her motion was stopt till such time as some of the family could overtake her, who endeavouring to carry her back, found her instantly fall as one dead, and become stiff; in which posture, being brought back to the chamber, she lay for a considerable space. And being recovered, she did declare, that there were about the number of nine or ten persons who had carried her away in a shue (as she termed it, that is, as one swinging upon a rope) wherein she then took pleasure, her feet not at all touching the ground, to her apprehension.

“ The night following, she was suddenly carried away, as before, from her parents and others who were about her, through the chamber and hall, and sixteen large steps of a winding stair, up toward the top of the house! where she met with apparitions of strange and unaccountable things, but was carried down again, as she thought, in a shue or swing, asserting, after her recovery, that she met upon the stair the number of six women and four men, and by them was carried toward the gate again, where accordingly she was found, and was carried up as formerly, all the parts of her body distended and stiff as one dead; in which posture she lay for some time, and when recovering, declared, that both now and formerly, she had endeavoured to open the gate, and that those she saw about her were helping her, with a design to get her to the court, to drown her in the well, which she said she heard them saying among themselves, they intended to do, and that then the world would believe she had destroyed herself. It is observable that (these kind of fits continuing with her for some few days) in one of them she was stopped at the gate, and found in the fore-mentioned posture, which was neither locked nor barred; yet could they not get it opened, though both she and her tormentors endeavoured it,

“Before we proceed in the relation, it is not to be omitted that as soon as the damsel’s affliction was observed to be extraordinary and preternatural, there were (besides times formerly set apart in a more private way) at the desire of the parents and minister, and by the presbytery’s special order, a minister or two appointed to meet every week, at the house of Bargarran, to join with the family, the minister of the parish, and other good Christians of the neighbourhood, in fasting and praying, which usually fell to be on the Tuesday. And upon Jan. 12th, it being the turn of Mr Patrick Simpson, a neighbour minister, to be there, when he came to the house he found both the minister of the parish, and the brother who was to join with him had been necessarily withdrawn; yet resolved to carry on the work with assistance of three elders, some other good people being present. When he first saw the damsel after he came to the house, he found her under some lesser fits which came and went off quickly, and when prayer began she was quiet and sober during the same, but in time of singing the xciii. Psalm she fell into a sore fit, of greater continuance, first laughing, then making some sound like singing, after that pulling her head-cloaths down over her face, and lastly, turning so outrageous in her motions that her father could scarce get her holden with his whole strength, but behoved to lie over upon the bed with her in his arms until the fit abated: after her recovery from which, she was quiet and composed all the time of prayer, and while the minister lectured on Mark ix. from 14 to 30<sup>th</sup> verse, was very attentive, carefully looking in her bible the scriptures quoted, so all along both in time of prayer and singing, until the whole religious exercise was ended, and some refreshment after the same taken, at the end of which she told the company, she had something to tell, which she had heard some among her tormentors saying, which she durst not reveal; but the minister and her mother urging her to be free and not to obey the Devil, she said, she would tell it her mother in her ear. Then coming from the other side of the table, and placing herself

betwixt her mother and aunt, she began to whisper in her mother's ear; but before she got a sentence fully pronounced, she fell into a violent fit, so as her mother and those next her could scarcely hold her till the violence thereof began to abate, and then her mother told that she was speaking of a meeting and a feast, they had spoke of in the orchard of Bargarran, but was able to say no more, and after recovery, her mother desiring her to tell the rest of it; and she beginning to whisper in her ear, as before, could not get one word uttered till she was seized again of a fit as violent as the former. Whereupon the minister perceiving her torment, desired them to forbear any further troubling of her. Notice, that accordingly there was a feast and meeting in that orchard about that time, of the crew, acknowledged and declared afterwards by three of them, that confessed themselves to have been there, *viz.* Elizabeth Anderson, James and Thomas Lindsay, they not knowing what either the damsel had spoken, or one of them what another had confessed relating thereunto.\*

About or within a little after this time, she was again suddenly carried from them in the former manner down a stair, which goes off from a corner of the chamber to a cellar just below it, where her brother and sister were providentially gone down a little before, to bring some drink from the cellar, and already near the stair foot, with a lighted candle, which she soon put out; but they crying and holding her by the head-cloaths, quickly discovered to the rest where she was. Upon which Mr. Alexander King, minister at Bonhill, (being then in the chamber) made haste down stairs where he found her, but her brother and sister had lost hold of her, she having loosed her head-cloaths and let them go; yet Mr King having caught hold of her, kept her in his arms till a lighted candle was brought, and endeavouring to bring her up stairs, did declare that he found something forcibly

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\* "See No. A of the Appendix."

drawing her downwards, but he still keeping his hold, she fell stiff, as one dead upon the stair, and was in this posture carried up and laid in bed, where she lay a considerable space. And when recovered of the fit, she declared that the occasion of her going down stairs with such force, was, that the crew had suggested to her while she was in the light fits, that the Devil was in the meal chest in the cellar, and that if she would go down and put out the candle, she might force him out of it. Notice here, first, that when some fits of this kind were ready to seize her, she sometimes gave advertisement thereof to those present with her, giving signs of her earnest desire of their help to prevent her motion, which usually proved to be of good effect, wherein the divine mercy toward her is much to be observed. 2. It is also to be noticed, that about the time when she was in these flying fits, she used to utter horrid shrieks and outcries, not like those of rational creatures; in which time there were heard for three nights together, when the damsel was asleep in bed, shrieks and outcries of the same kind in the court, when none of the family was without doors, to the great affrightment of those who heard them, being that they exactly resembled the cries of, and shrieks the damsel used to utter in the fits; who afterwards in one of her intervals hearing some of the family talking of these cries and shrieks, and alleging they had been uttered by some wild beast or other, said to them they were mistaken, for it was Margaret. And two others of the name of Margaret, called by the crew their Maggies, had uttered these shrieks, the Devil having promised to them at that time to carry her out of the house to them, that they might drown her in the well, where there were eighteen more waiting for her.

“After this she fell into fretting and angry fits (as she termed them) in which her humour was cross to all that those about her could say or do, nothing proving to her satisfaction, but every thing displeasing, (her former fits withal now and then seizing her) but when restored to a right composure of mind, she declared that her tormentors

about her, did still suggest to her and advise her, to go to such and such remote places of the house alone, and bring with her a snood (which is a head-lace, such as women tie up their hair with) or a cravat or some such thing, promising her rough almonds or some kinds of sweet meats which they named to her, and for that end, to bring her apron with her to hold them in, and accordingly when seized again with fits of this nature, did resolutely endeavour to repair to these places, having a snood or cravat and her apron with her, and would suffer none to be in her company, which put her parents and others to a necessity of detaining her by force, and she being thus prevented, uttered hideous screeches and outcries, of which in this sort of fits she was seldom free.

“ Thursday, January 14th, at night, a young lass or girl appeared to her with a scabbed face amongst the rest of her tormentors, telling her she was to come to the house to-morrow about ten o’clock, and forbidding her to reveal it.

“ The next day, being January 15th, in the afternoon, the damsel earnestly inquired at her mother and the rest of the family what beggars had come to the gate that day, and of what countenance and visage they were? but the family not knowing her design in such a question, gave no heed unto it; yet she still insisting, and being in company with her mother and another gentlewoman, about four o’clock at night, said to them, she thought she might tell them somewhat (the time being now past) she was forbidden to reveal it; but beginning to tell, she presently fell a crying, that she was tormented and pricked through her whole body, yet recovering from the fit, went on and told it; the thing she had to reveal was, that a scabbed faced lass appeared to her yesternight, and was to be at the gate this day at ten o’clock. Whereupon the servants being inquired at, what sort of beggars had been there that day, did declare among others, there had been a beggar wife at the door, and a young woman or lass with her who had scabs on her face, and received their alms.



“ January 16th and 17th, when recovered of her swooning fits, she put out of her mouth a great number of pins, which she declared J—— P—— had forced into her mouth, and a gentlewoman who had been one of her most violent tormentors.

“ January 21st, her fits altered again, after this manner, she would fall in them with heavy sighs and groans, and hideous outcries, telling those about her that cats, ravens, owls, and horses, were destroying and pressing her down in the bed: and at the same time her mother and another gentlewoman, being in the room with her, did declare, that immediately after they had taken the girl out of her bed in this condition, they did see something moving under the bed-cloaths as big as a cat.

“ The same morning, in the interval of her fits, she said she heard her tormentors whisper among themselves, and suggest to one another, (naming J—— P——, the Andersons and others) that the Devil had promised and engaged to them, to carry her over the hall window, to the end they might drown her in the well which was in the court, and then they said the world would believe she had destroyed herself; and the same day, and several days thereafter, when seized with her grievous fits, did attempt with such force to get herself over that window, that spectators could scarce with their whole strength prevent her.

“ About this time, nothing in the world would so discompose her as religious exercises; if there were any discourses of God or Christ, or any of the things which are not seen and are eternal, she would be cast into grievous agonies; and when she essayed in her light fits, to read any portion of the scriptures, repeat any of the Psalms, or answer any questions of our catechisms (which she could do exactly at other times) she was suddenly struck dumb, and lay as one stiff dead, her mouth opened to such a wideness that her jaw appeared to be out of joint, and anon would clap together again with incredible force. The same happened to her shoulder blade, her elbow, and

hand wrists. She would at other times lie in a benumbed condition, and be drawn together as if she had been tied neck and heels with ropes; yet on a sudden would with such force and violence be pulled up and tear all about her, that it was as much as one or two could do, to hold her fast in their arms; but when ministers and other good Christians (seeing her in such intolerable anguishes) made serious application by prayer to God, on her behalf, she got respite from her grievous fits of this kind, and was ordinarily free of them during the time of prayer, though seized of them before; and albeit, usually, when ministers began to pray, she made great disturbance by idle loud talking, whistling, singing and roaring, to drown the voice of the person praying.

“Particularly January 22d, she was more turbulent than at other times she used to be, and continued some space after the minister began to pray, singing, and making hideous noise, fetching furious blows with her fist, and kicks with her feet at the minister, uttering reproachful talk of him, and calling him dog, &c. Yet she being composed and her fits being over before prayer was ended, and the minister, when he had done, finding her sober and in a right composure of mind, inquired why she made such disturbance? To which she replied, she was forced to do it by the hellish crew about her; and that she thought they were none of her own words that she uttered.

“January 24th, she said some things relating both to herself and others, had been suggested to her by her troublers; but that they had threatened to torment her, if she should offer to make them known. And accordingly in essaying to express her mind, she was cast into two grievous fits, in which she cried out of violent pains; all the parts of her body becoming rigid and extended like a corpse, her head was twisted round, and if any offered by force to obstruct such dangerous motion she seemed to be upon, she would roar exceedingly; sometimes her neck bone seemed to be dissolved; and yet on a sudden became

so stiff, that there was no moving of it; and when these grievous agonies were over, she again essayed to express her mind by write, but to no purpose; for instantly she was cast into other two very grievous fits, wherein she was struck dumb, deaf and blind, and her tongue drawn a prodigious length over her chin. And when the fits were over, declared, the Andersons, J—— P—— the gentlewoman, and I—— D——, with the rest of the hellish crew, some of whom she could not name, had been tormenting her in the fits, and that there had been fifteen of them about the house all the last night, but were now all gone save one, who was to stay about the house till her fits were over. And accordingly her brother and sister did declare, they saw that morning a woman in the garden with a red coat about her head, sitting at the root of an apple tree; but Bargarran, with most of the servants, being abroad, the matter was not further searched.

“The same day about six at night, she was seized with variety of grievous fits again, in which sometimes she lay wholly senseless and breathless, with her belly swelled like a drum, as like a woman with child, her eyes were pulled into her head so far, that spectators thought she should never have used them more, sometimes when she was tying her own neck-cloaths, her enchanted hand would tie them so strait about her neck, that she had strangled herself if spectators had not given some relief unto her; sometimes she was in hazard of burning herself in the fire, offering with violence to throw herself into the same. Divers times she did strike furious blows at her near relations in her fits, she would maintain discourse with her tormentors, and asking questions concerning herself and others, received answer from them; which indeed none but herself perceived; reasoning with one of them after this manner:

“‘O what ailed thee to be a witch! thou sayest it is but three nights since thou wast a witch. O if thou wouldest repent, it may be God might give thee repentance, if thou wouldest seek it and confess; if thou would desire me I

would do what I could ; for the Devil is an ill master to serve, he is a liar from the beginning, he promises what he cannot perform.' Then calling for her Bible, she said 'I will let thee see where he promised to our first parents that they should not die;' (and reading the passage, said) 'now thou seest he is a liar, for by breaking the commandment, they were made liable to death here, and death everlasting. O that is an uncouth word; long eternity never to have an end, never, never to have an end; had not God, of his infinite mercy, ordained some to eternal life through Jesus Christ. The Devil makes thee believe thou wilt get great riches by serving him; but come near,' and having uttered this word, she lost power of her speech, her tongue being drawn back into her throat; yet beckoning with her hand to the spectre to come near her, and turning over the book, kept her eye upon that passage of holy scripture, Job xxvii. 18, and pointing with her finger at the place, and shaking her head, turned over the book again, and recovering her speech, said, 'I'll let thee see where God bids us seek and we shall find;' and reading over the place, said, 'it is God that gives us every good gift, we have nothing of our own, I submit to his will though I never be better; for God can make all my trouble turn to my advantage, according to his word,' Rom. viii. 28, which place she then read, and thus continued reasoning, for the space of an hour.

"Sometimes she cried out of violent pain, by reason of furious blows and strokes, she had received from the hands of her tormentors, the noise of which strokes, bye-standers distinctly heard, though they perceived not the hands that gave them.

"One night the girl sitting with her parents and others cried out, something was wounding her thigh; upon which instantly her mother putting her hand in the damsel's pocket, found her folding knife opened, which had been folded when put in her pocket; but her uncle not trusting the thing, did again put up the knife, and leaving it folded in her pocket, on a sudden she cried out, as be-

fore, the knife was cutting her thigh, being unfolded by means of J. P. and others, as she said : upon which her uncle searching her pocket again, found the knife opened as formerly. This happened twice or thrice, to the admiration of the beholders, though they took special notice that she nor any other visible hand opened it.

“ January 25th, she was again seized with her swooning stiff fits, with this remarkable variation; her throat was sometimes most prodigiously extended, and sometimes as strangely contracted; so that she appeared in palpable danger of being choaked; and through the violence of pain in her throat, and difficulty of breathing, struggled with feet and hands, as if some had been actually strangling her, and could speak or cry none; with which kind of fits she was frequently seized for several days, and in the intervals, did declare, that the fore-mentioned persons and others, (whom she could not get then named) were strangling her, and that the occasion of her not having power to speak or cry in the fit was a ball in her throat, which also was visible to spectators; for they did clearly discern a bunch in her throat (while in the fit) as big as a pullet’s egg which had almost choaked her.

“ Sometimes she was kept from eating her meat, having her teeth set, when she carried any food to her mouth. Divers times also she was kept from drinking, when at meat; for no sooner could she taste the drink, but she was in hazard to be choaked thereby, and herself sometimes would have held the cup so hard betwixt her teeth, that it was not in the power of those with her to unloose it. And when anything had fallen out amiss in the place where she was, as the falling and breaking of a cup, any body’s receiving harm, and such like, she would fall a laughing and rejoice extremely : which kind of jollity was far from the girl’s temper when at herself.

“ February 1st, she essaying to tell some things she had been forbidden by her tormentors to make known, was handled with intolerable torments. At the beginning of her fits, usually she would be kept oddly looking, some-

times towards the chimney, sometimes towards other particular places in the room, but could not always tell what she saw; yet for ordinary she would name such and such persons, who, she said, were then come to cast her into fits. And when any desired her to cry to the Lord Jesus for help, her teeth were instantly set close, her eyes twisted almost round in her head, and she was thrown upon the floor with the stiffness and posture of one that had been some days laid for dead; and on a sudden recovered again, and would weep bitterly, to remember what had befallen her. The same day, when her fits were over, she said, she now perceived it was by the means of a charm, that such restraints were laid upon her, that she could not tell what the witches had forbidden her to make known, but the charm might be found out (as she said) by searching for it beneath the bed where she lay; and she having quickly done this herself, found (to the apprehension of spectators) beneath the foresaid bed, an entire egg shell open in the end, which being instantly thrown into the fire, did melt away after the manner of wax, without any noise as egg shells use to make when burning in the fire. After this the girl said, she would not now be handled so severely, upon essaying to make known what the witches had forbidden her to tell, only her tongue would be drawn back into her throat, which accordingly happened. She did likewise inform her friends of many things she had not liberty to do, before the charm was found out, particularly, that her tormentors had frequently solicited her to become a witch herself, and promised her great riches and perfect health also, to induce her thereunto. Which temptation, she, through the infinite mercy of God, still resisted, reasoning with them after this manner: 'the Devil promises what he cannot perform, and granting he could fulfil his promises, yet I am sure from the scriptures, hell and the wrath of God will be the final reward of all such as yield to this wickedness.' To which she received this reply, (which indeed, none but herself perceived) that, hell and the wrath of God so much talked of, was not so



formidable as was represented. She also said, the witches had importunately urged her to give them her consent, to take away the life of her young sister, who was at that time upon her mother's breast; which temptation also she was enabled through the grace of God to resist. She told her parents likewise, there had been a charm laid upon the top of the house, where her young sister was (the child having been sent out a nursing, by reason of the continued affliction of the family) and that the charm had been placed upon the top of the house by pinched Maggy, who thereby did design the taking away of her sister's life; and that this was the cause why she had so often, for some weeks before, desired her mother to bring home her sister, constantly affirming, that the child would daily decay as long as she staid there. Whereupon her parents observing the daily decay of the infant, even to skin and bone, brought her home, where she recovered. The girl being asked how she came to the knowledge of these things? replied, something speaking distinctly as it were above her head, had suggested these, and other things of that nature to her.

“Feb. 2d. The girl being in the chamber with her mother and others, was on a sudden struck with great fear and consternation, and fell a trembling upon the sight of John Lindsay, in Barloch, talking with her father in the hall. She said to her mother, the foresaid Lindsay had been always one of her most violent tormentors, and that she had been threatened with extreme tortures, if she should offer to name him; whereupon she was desired to go towards the place where he was, and touch some part of his body in a way unknown to him, which having done with some aversion, was instantly seized with extreme tortures in all the parts of her body. After which Lindsay was put to it, and interrogated thereupon; but he giving no satisfying answer, was desired to take the damsel by the hand, which he being unwillingly induced to do, she was immediately upon his touch cast into intolerable anguishes, her eyes being almost twisted round in her head,

and all the parts of her body becoming rigid and stiff, fell down in the posture of one that had been laid for some days dead, and afterwards got up in a sudden, and tearing her cloaths threw herself with violence upon him, and when her fit was over, spectators did also take the damsel by the hand, yet no such effect followed.

“About six at night there came an old Highland fellow to Bargarran, who calling himself a weary traveller, said, he behoved to lodge there that night, but the servants refusing him lodging, gave him something by way of alms. At this time the damsel being in the chamber with her mother and another gentlewoman, said to the best of her apprehension, there was one of the wicked crew in or about the house at that time: whereupon her mother made haste with her daughter down stairs towards the kitchen. And finding there unexpectedly the Highland fellow, whom the girl then accused as one of her tormentors, she desired the Highland fellow to take her daughter by the hand, which he being urged to do, the girl immediately upon his touch was grievously tormented in all the parts of her body. And this falling out in divine providence, Bargarran caused secure him.

“The next morning, the minister having come to Bargarran to visit the damsel, and the matter being imparted to him, called for the Highland fellow, and having questioned him to and again about this matter, without any satisfying answer, brought the child out of the chamber, covering her face, and almost her whole body with his cloak, and giving signs to the Highland fellow to touch her in this posture, as he had ordered him before, without the damsel's knowledge, which he having done with great aversion, the girl not knowing of his touch, was instantly cast into intolerable agonies as formerly; yet others afterwards touching her, no such event followed. And when her fits were over, she besought the Highland fellow, to allow her the liberty for to discover and tell persons that haunted and molested her, whom he had forbidden her to make known: upon which the old fellow look-

ing at her with an angry countenance, her mouth was instantly stopped, and her teeth set: and being desired by those present to speak her mind freely, whether he would or not, at length replied, she feared to do it. And when through the importunity of John Maxwell of Dargavel, and Porterfield of Fulwood, and some other gentlemen there present, she essayed to declare her mind, she was seized with her fits again.

Before this time, the lamentable case of the afflicted damsel and family, had been represented to His Majesty's most honourable privy council, who upon serious application made to them, worthily and piously granted a commission to a noble lord and some worthy gentlemen, to make inquiry into the same. By virtue of this commission, some suspected persons were seized; particularly, Feb. 4, Alexander Anderson, an ignorant, irreligious fellow, who had been always of evil fame, and accused by the afflicted damsel, by a special order from the commissioners for inquiry, was apprehended and committed to prison; as was also Elizabeth Anderson his daughter, upon flagrant presumptions of witchcraft; for the other year, Jean Fulton, her grandmother, an old scandalous woman, being cited before the kirk-session, and accused for hideous cursing, and imprecating mischief upon several persons, which had been followed with fatal events, the fore-mentioned Elizabeth Anderson, her grandchild, who lived in the house with her, did declare before the session, she had frequently seen the Devil in company with her grandmother, in the likeness of a small black man, who usually did evanish on a sudden within the walls of the house, when any body came to the door. Upon this presumption was the said Elizabeth Anderson seized with her father, and committed to custody; but at first most obstinately denied accession any manner of way to the sin of witchcraft, until afterwards, when seriously importuned and dealt with in the prison by two gentlemen, did, before she came to Bargarran's house, confess her guilt, without Bargarran's knowledge at that time. And that she had

been at several meetings with the Devil and witches, and amongst others, she did declare her own father, and the forementioned Highland fellow, to have been active instruments of the girl's trouble; and gave, before she was confronted with him, exact marks of this Highland body, and though she declared she knew not his name, yet when confronted with him, did accuse him, and affirm he was the person she spoke of.\*

"February 5th, a quorum of the commissioners being met at Bargarran, and the persons then delated by Elizabeth Anderson to have been at meetings with the Devil, and active instruments of the damsel's trouble, *viz.*, Alexander Anderson, her father, Agnes Naismith, Margaret Fulton, James Lindsay, alias Curat, John Lindsay, alias Bishop, Katherine Campbell, were all of them (excepting John Lindsay, alias Bishop, who was not then apprehended), confronted with Katherine Shaw before the Lord Blantyre, and the rest of the commissioners at Bargarran, and several other gentlemen of note, and ministers then present, and accused by her as her tormentors. And they having all severally touched her in presence of the commissioners, she was at each of their touches seized with grievous fits, and cast into intolerable anguishes, others then present also touching her the same way, but no such effect followed. And it is remarkable, when Katherine Campbell touched the girl, she was immediately upon her touch seized with more grievous fits, and cast into more intolerable torments than what followed upon the touch of the other accused persons, whereat Campbell herself being damped and confounded, though she had formerly declined to bless her, uttered these words; 'The Lord God of heaven and earth bless thee, and save thee both soul and body.' After which the damsel, when the fits were over, in which she had been a most pitiful spectacle, did declare, she was now loosed, and that she might freely touch any of the accused persons, or they her after this, without trouble, which ac-

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\* "See No. A of the Appendix."

cordingly upon trial fell so out, and being inquired how she came to the knowledge of that, answered as formerly in the like case, That something speaking distinctly as it were above her head, suggested this to her; and likewise usually gave her the knowledge of the names of her tormentors, and places in which they lived.

“February 6. The girl being seized with sore fits, something was seen in her mouth, to the judgment of spectators like pieces of orange pills invisibly conveyed into her mouth, which she seemed in her agonies to be chewing, and having got down her throat, as those present apprehended, she did fall down dead and stiff, as if she had been choaked, struggling with her feet and hands, as if at the last gasp, her throat swelling in a prodigious manner, to the affrightment of spectators; and when recovered, but yet in the light fit, she would say, O it was a very sweet orange pill which I got from the gentlewoman, and did constantly affirm the same, declaring also that there had been others there present with the gentlewoman, particularly Margaret L——, or pinched Maggy, whose surname she had neither power nor liberty to express, neither durst she offer to do it, least she should be tormented as was threatened, and always fell out when she essayed to do it, either by speaking or writing, which had appeared the day before in the presence of the commissioners.

“About this time, Thomas Lindsay, a young boy not yet twelve years of age, was seized, upon flagrant presumptions of witchcraft; he had said before several credible persons, the Devil was his father, and if he pleased he could fly in the likeness of a crow upon the mast of a ship. He sometimes caused a plough stand and the horse break the yoke, upon the pronouncing of some words, and turning himself about wider-shins; that is, turning himself round from the right hand to the left, contrary to the natural course of the sun. This he would do upon the desire of any body who gave him a halfpenny. Upon these and the like flagrant presumptions he was apprehended, who, at first, though he continued most obstinate in denial,

yet afterwards confessed to the minister in his own house, before famous witnesses, compact with the Devil, and that he had received the insensible mark from the Devil, which is visible upon his body; as also, that he had been at several meetings with the Devil and witches, where he said were present, his brother James, with others, and particularly those who had been delated by Anderson. This he confessed, with some other wickedness of this kind, before he was committed to custody in Bargarran house.

“After this Bargarran made diligent search for James Lindsay, elder brother to Thomas, having been all along accused by the afflicted damsel as one of her troublers, whom she called the gley’d or squint-eyed elf (as he was indeed) for that was the name the crew about her gave him, who when he was brought upon the place, though he did at first most obstinately deny his guilt, yet at length through the endeavours of Mr Patrick Simpson, a neighbour minister, ingenuously confessed the guilt he was charged with, and in his confession did agree in every material circumstance with the other two, though he knew not what they had confessed, he having not seen them before his confession, nor had he any occasion of information in conference with others thereanent, being immediately brought to the place from the tolbooth of Glasgow, where he had been some weeks before that time in prison, as a vagabond beggar upon a design to have sent him to foreign plantations.

“A more particular account of what they freely confessed and acknowledged before the commissioners for inquiry, we have for the satisfaction of the reader subjoined to the narrative, with an abstract of the report made by the commissioners to the lords of his majesty’s most honourable privy council, concerning the whole affair.

“February 11. There was by the presbytery’s appointment, a public fast kept upon the damsel’s account in the church of Erskine, in which Mr Turner, minister of the place, began the work with prayer, expounding Rev. xii. from ver. 7. to ver. 13. Mr James Hutchison, minister at



Kilellan, took the next turn of prayer, and did preach upon 1 Pet. v. 8, and Mr Simpson concluded the work, preaching upon Matthew xvii. 20, 21, where the girl was present all day ; but before she came to church that morning, she told, that while she was in one of her fits, the night before, she heard the Devil speaking of that public fast, and what ministers were to be there, and that old man Mr. James Hutchison should stumble, and his peruke fall off as he went up to the pulpit, and all the people should laugh at him, and he should break his neck in going home. And when she came out of the church after the forenoon's work, she said, the Devil was a liar ; for no such thing fell out as he had threatened. She was all day very quiet in church, although being in some of her light fits, some spectres appeared in time of the public work, which she told of thereafter.

“ About six at night, there were present in the chamber with the damsel, Mr. Simpson with his wife, lady Northbar, and others, discoursing and conferring about her case ; and while they were conferring together, she told them, she would gladly make some things known if she durst for her tormentors ; and afterwards essaying to do it, was instantly seized with a violent fit, in which she leapt straight up, and appeared as if she had been choaked ; so it was as much as one or two could do, to hold her fast in their arms ; and when the fit was over, Mr. Simpson going about family worship, did expound Psalm cx., and speaking of the limited power of the adversaries of our Lord Jesus Christ, from the latter part of ver. 1, she was on a sudden seized with another grievous fit, in which she put out of her mouth some blood, which raised grounds of fear and jealousy in the minds of spectators, that something in her mouth hurting her, had been the occasion of it, yet they could not get her mouth opened, though they used means to open the same, her teeth being close set. And in the interval of the fit, she being asked, if she found any thing in her mouth that had been the occasion of her putting out of blood ; she replied, she found nothing, nor knew the cause thereof :

but opening her mouth, those present found one of her double teeth newly drawn out, but knew not what became of the tooth; for though search was made for the same, it could not be found; after which the minister proceeded upon the same subject, but was again interrupted by her renewed fits, yet closed the exercise with prayer, after which, without more trouble, she was taken to her bed.

“February 12, Margaret Lang and her daughter Martha Semple, being delated by the three confessants, and accused by the girl to have been active instruments in her trouble, came of their own accord to Bargarran’s house, and before they came up stairs, the girl said, she was now bound up, and could not accuse Margaret Lang to her face; and accordingly the girl’s mother having desired some of those who were sitting by her, to feel some parts of her body, and they having done it, found her body so stiff and inflexible, that there was no moving of it, and immediately again found some parts of her body so contracted and drawn hard together, as if by cords: after this, Margaret Lang and her daughter, having gone to the chamber to the girl, did, in presence of the ministers and others, desire the damsel to come to her, for she would do her no harm, and laying her arms about her, spake very fairly to her, and questioned her, if ever she had seen her or her daughter amongst her tormentors, to which the girl did positively reply, she had frequently seen her daughter; but declined through fear to accuse herself, saying faintly, No. After which Margaret and her daughter returning into the hall, and the minister inquiring at her why she said, No, seeing she had accused her before, she answered, take me contrary, upon which she was seized with a grievous fit; yet after her recovery, being urged again by those present, to tell her mind freely, whether or not Margaret Lang was one of her tormentors, the child thereupon essaying to say Yes, and having half pronounced the word, was cast into unexpressible anguishes; and again, in the interval of the fit, she essayed to express the same thing, and saying the word, *Tint* (that is, lost) was on a sudden struck with

another fit, and when the fit was over, and the child returned to the chamber, Margaret Lang, who was sitting near the hall door, spoke these words after her, 'The Lord bless thee, and ding (that is, beat or drive) the Devil out of thee.' A little after which words, Margaret going down stairs, the damsel came to the hall, and said, her bonds were now loosed, and that now she could accuse Margaret Lang to her face, and declared the occasion of her being so restrained and bound up while Margaret was present, was her letting fall a parcel of hair at the hall door as she came in; being a charm made by her for that end, which also had been the occasion of her uttering the word tint, in the former fit: and accordingly a parcel of hair had been found at the hall door, after Margaret Lang had gone straight from the hall to the chamber, which immediately was cast into the fire and burned. And it is remarkable that it could be attested, that there was no hair, or any other thing else in that place before Margaret Lang came in, and the girl being inquired what way she knew Margaret Lang had laid the forementioned charm upon her, replied, something speaking distinctly to her, as it were above her head, had suggested that to her.

"About eight at night she was severely handled in her fits, much after the former manner, and while she was in her swooning fits, there was seen in her mouth a pin, wherewith she seemed almost choaked, but by divine providence it was with great difficulty got out. After this she was somewhat composed, and did not much complain of pain; but was distinctly heard to entertain discourse with some invisible creature about her, and the replies given by her, and heard by those who took care of her, gave them ground to conclude she was tempted to set her hand to a paper then presented to her, with promises that upon her yielding thereunto, she should never be troubled any more; as also that she should get sweet meats, a drink of sack, a bonny handsome coat with silver lace. She was also distinctly heard say, resisting the tempter, 'Thou art a filthy sow, should I obey thee?' this was not the end of

my creation, but to glorify God and enjoy him for ever; and thou promisest what thou cannot perform, art thou angry at me for saying, thou sow, what should I call thee, but thou filthy sow; art thou not the filthy Devil, for as brave as thou art with thy silver and gold lace, wouldest thou have me renounce my baptism? Dost thou promise to give me brave men in marriage, and fine cloaths, and perfect health, if I should consent thereunto? Dost thou say my baptism will do me no good, because thou alledgedst he was not a sufficient minister that baptised me? Thou art a liar, I will be content to die, before I renounce my baptism, O through the grace of God I will never do it.' And thus she continued reasoning, being both blind and deaf, for the space of two hours; and when she came to herself, did declare, it was the Devil who first presented himself, tempting her in the shape of a sow, to renounce her baptism, as is hinted; and that he did chide her when she called him, thou sow, and immediately appeared to her again, in the shape of a brave gentleman, as having gold and silver lace on his cloaths, still urging her to renounce her baptism, which temptation she through the special assistance of the grace of God, effectually resisted: she also said, that it had been suggested to her by the Spirit, speaking to her, as it were above her head, after the combat with the tempter was over, that one of her tormentors would be at the house the morrow.

"February 13, she was seized with a sore fit about twelve o'clock of the day, in which she continued for more than two hours' space, both deaf and blind. Those in the room with her, crying to her with a loud voice, and pinching her hands and other parts of her body; but all to no purpose. And in this posture she was hurried to and fro with violence through the room; and when any body by force offered to hinder the dangerous and violent motion she seemed to be upon, she would roar exceedingly, sometimes she desired her father and mother and others to come and take her home, (supposing herself not to be in her father's house) when the girl was in this deplorable condition,

Margaret Roger, who lived in the neighbourhood, came to the house of Bargarran, inquiring for the lady and having come up stairs, the parents of the damsel remembering what the girl had said the night before, that one of her tormentors was to come that day to the house, brought Margaret Roger to the chamber where the girl was; and so soon as she entered the door, the damsel, though she could discern none of these who were present with her, nor answer them when they cried to her; yet presently saw her, and ran towards her, crying, 'Maggy, Maggy, where hast thou been? wilt thou take me with thee, for my father and mother have left me.' Whereupon spectators being astonished, caused Margaret speak to the child, which she having done, the girl distinctly heard and answered her every word. After this, the three confessants were also brought up to the chamber where the damsel was, and so soon as they entered the door, she ran also to them laughing, as if she had been overjoyed, answering them when they spoke to her; and Margaret Roger there present, being confronted with the confessants: they did declare, that she had been at meetings with the Devil and witches in Bargarran orchard, consulting and contriving Christian Shaw's ruin.

"The Lord's day following, being February 14, after some short intervals, she was again seized with her fits, in which she said, 'Margaret Lang and her daughter, Martha Semple, were tormenting her and cutting her throat;' which words, through violence of pain, and difficulty of breathing, she uttered with a low and hardly audible voice, and upon the naming of Margaret Lang and her daughter she was tossed and dreadfully tormented in all the parts of her body, being made sometimes to stand upon her head and feet at once, sometimes her belly swelling like a drum; and falling again in a sudden, and sometimes her head and other parts of her body were like to be shaken in pieces, so that spectators feared she would never speak more. And when the fit was over, she declared, Margaret Lang said to her, when in the fit, 'that she would give her a

tosty,' (which imports hot and severe handling) for naming her.

"At this time she was seldom free of her light fits, which for most part were all the respite and ease she had from the unexpressible agonies she endured in her more grievous fits unless when asleep: and while she was in these fits, nobody could persuade her to pray, yet when in a right composure of mind and perfectly at herself, she would weep bitterly to remember this, expressing her fears, lest that might be any evidence God would forsake her.

"February 18. About two in the afternoon, she being in the light fit, said, 'the Devil now appeared to her in the shape of a man;' whereupon being struck with great fear and consternation, she was desired to pray with an audible voice, 'the Lord rebuke thee, Satan,' which she essaying to do, instantly lost power of speech, her teeth being set, and her tongue drawn back into her throat, and she essaying again, was immediately seized with another grievous fit: in which her eyes being twisted almost round in her head, she fell down as one dead, struggling with her feet and hands, and again getting up on a sudden, was hurried with violence to and fro through the room deaf and blind; yet was speaking with some invisible creatures about her, saying, 'with the Lord's strength, thou shalt neither put straw nor stick into my mouth.'" After this, she cried in a pitiful manner, 'the bumbee has stinged me,' then presently sitting down and loosing her stockings, put her hand to that part which had been nipped or pinched, whereupon spectators did visibly discern the lively marks of nails of fingers deeply imprinted on that same part of her leg. And when she came to herself, she did declare, 'that something speaking to her as it were above her head,' told her it was M. M., in a neighbouring parish, (naming the place) 'that had appeared to her and pinched her leg in the likeness of a bumbee.' She likewise did declare, that the forementioned M. M. 'instantly after this had been suggested to her, appeared in her own shape, and likeness as she used to be at other times.' Shortly after



this, being still seized with her light fit, she whispered in her mother's ear, 'the Devil was now appearing to her again in the shape of a gentleman:' and being instantly seized with her fits, in which she was both blind and deaf, was distinctly heard arguing after this manner: 'thou thinkest to tempt me to be a witch; but through God's strength thou shalt never be the better; I charge thee, in the name of God, to begone and thy papers too. In the Lord's strength I will not fear thee. I will stand here and see if thou can come one step nearer me, I think thou fearest me more than I fear thee.' Then turning herself again, she was hurried to and fro with violence through the room, as formerly, saying, 'she was bitten or pinched very sore in the hand with teeth, and nipped with fingers about twenty-four times;' which constrained her to horrid screechs and outcries at every time she received them, shewing and pointing with her finger to these parts of her arm and leg which had been pinched and bitten, but neither saw nor heard any about her. And accordingly spectators did visibly discern the evident marks of teeth and nails of fingers upon her arms and legs. In this posture the girl continued from two till five in the afternoon, and when her misery was over, she said, 'M. M. told her in the fit, that Margaret Lang, then in custody, had ordered her to handle her after that manner. And that Margaret Lang had a commanding power over her.'

" Friday and Saturday thereafter, being Feb. 19th and 20th, she was frequently seized with the forementioned fits, and being violently bitten, pinched, and nipped, in her hands, neck, and other parts of her body, so that the clear marks of the nails of fingers and steads of teeth, both upper and lower, with the spittle and slaver of a mouth thereupon, was evidently seen by spectators. About this time, when seized with her blind and deaf fits, a crooked fellow appeared to her, having his feet deformed, his two heels wrying inward toward one another, and the foreparts of his feet outward from one another, so that the broad-side of his feet moved foremost, and upon the appearing of

this fellow her feet were put in the very same posture, during the time he tormented her. It is to be noticed, that there is a fellow in one of the neighbouring parishes, whose feet are exactly in that manner deformed, who has been a long time of ill fame, and given up by the confessants, to have been at meetings with the Devil and the rest of the crew, in Bargarran orchard.

“Saturday, being Feb. 20th, the whole family being gone to bed, they had left a great quantity of peats or turf, beside the hall chimney, which the next morning they saw them burnt to ashes, though there had been no fire in the chimney nor near them, so that the plaister and stones of the wall where the peats or turf lay, were in a great part turned to rubbish, through the violence of the fire, but no other damage followed, the hall floor being laid with stones, and the peats lying within the bosom of a large chimney brace.

“Feb. 27th, The chamber fire having been covered with ashes, in the chimney, when the family went to bed, the next morning, though a good quantity of ashes had been left, yet they found all clean swept away, and no appearance of ashes nor fire there at all; albeit none in the family that night or next morning had been there after the fire was gathered, before this was observed.

“In fits of this kind she continued for several days thereafter, naming the forementioned crooked fellow, J. R. and M. A. living in the neighbouring parishes, which two women were delated, by the three confessants to be amongst her tormentors, and particularly upon the Lord’s day, being Feb. 21st, and the Monday following, the said J. R. appearing to her grievously vexed her, withal telling her she was commissioned so to do, the gentlewoman M. M. having a pain in her head at the time, and so not able to come forth, concerning which, it is worthy of remark, that the damsel declared M. M. to have appeared to her about two days thereafter, with her head bound up with a napkin or handkerchief, in which like habit or posture, she did not formerly appear.

“ Upon Thursday thereafter, being Feb. 25th, she continued in the former fits, weeping bitterly and complaining of pain in both her sides: she also told in the interval of her fits, that she was that night to be in very grievous and sore fits, her tormentors being resolved to choak her, by putting pins in her mouth, which (though she emptied herself of all that were in her cloaths) yet accordingly came to pass; in which she was both blind and deaf, leaping up and down in an extraordinary manner, pulling down whatever came to her hand; and thus continued for some days, putting out of her mouth a great quantity of small broken pins, which she declared, J. R. had forced in the same.

“ Upon the Lord’s day, being the last of Feb., about five o’clock in the afternoon, she fell into grievous fits, accompanied with hideous or loud laughing, leaping, and running with violence to and fro, and thereafter wept sore, crying out of pain, that a little Highlandman (whom she knew to be such by his habit and speech) was now breaking her leg; which (because of pain) she scarce could get told in the fit, and putting her hand to the part of her leg affected, spectators untying her stocking, distinctly observed a sore bruise in her shin bone; which when touched, did so pain her, that she uttered horrid screechs and cries; and when recovered, did declare, that the little Highland fellow had given her that bruise. After this, she put out of her mouth a crooked pin, by which she told the foresaid Highland fellow having forced it into her mouth, designed to choak her.

“ The first eight days of March, she continued in her former fits, with little variation, putting out of her mouth a great number of small pins, often fainting and falling, as dead; upon the ground on a sudden, again struggling with feet and hands; by all which, her natural spirits were much weakened and exhausted; sometimes also she essayed to go into the fire. About this time, when ministers and other Christians met in the family for prayer, she used at the beginning of the work to make great disturbance, particularly March 2d, which day, being set apart for

fasting and prayer in the family, prayer begun, she was for some time very composed, until of a sudden, a strong blast of wind forced open the windows of the room, upon which she was instantly seized with a violent fit, the minister in the very same time supplicating God, that she might be delivered from Satan's bonds; in which fit she being both blind and deaf as to all, except her tormentors, was hurried with violence to and fro in the room, sometimes falling down as one dead, sometimes singing and making a hideous loud noise, sometimes naming M. M. and others; who, she said, were there present, afflicting and tormenting her, withal, naming the particular places of the room where she saw them standing and sitting. After all which, when recovered out of the fit, she told that a gentlewoman and a little Highland fellow, came in with the blast of wind which forced open the windows. This falling out upon the Tuesday, she continued in the light fit without any intermission, till the sabbath thereafter, not being seized with any of her sore fits, and having gone to church the Lord's day following, she was perfectly well for the most part of the day, yet affirmed she saw Janet Wagh and others, in one of the windows of the church, though invisible to all others.

"Tuesday, being March 9th, her mother and Margaret Campbell, her cousin, took the damsel to walk with them in the orchard; and returning back to the house, her mother entering the tower gate first, the damsel being at her back, and Margaret Campbell tarrying a little while at the gate; her mother going into the kitchen, supposed they had been with her, whereas the damsel was, of a sudden, carried away in a flight up stairs with so swift and unaccountable a motion, that her absence was not in the least suspected; her mother turning and missing her, cried, whither is Christian and Margaret Campbell? and instantly running up stairs to look for the damsel, heard a noise, and following the same, found the damsel leaping and dancing upon one of the stairs, being seized with fits, out of which when she had recovered she told, that J. P. had

carried her away from her mother's back, as she entered the kitchen door, (her not touching the ground to her apprehension) and that with a design to strangle her in an high wardrobe with ropes, on which the linen used to dry, but that the said J. P. could carry her no further than the place where she was found, and did therefore leave her in such a violent fit.

“Upon the Lord's day thereafter, being March 14th, her fits again altered, in that her mouth and nose were prodigiously distorted and turning about while in the fit, her face being thereby strangely and horribly deformed. The same day she being in church in the forenoon, her glove falling from her, the same was again put into her hand by some invisible agent, to the amazement of beholders. To which we add here, as that which is worthy of remark, that all this while an invisible being haunted her on all occasions, suggesting many things to her, both concerning herself and others; but yet never heard by any but herself.

“The same day betwixt sermons, she told that she was to be violently tormented in the afternoon; which accordingly came to pass, and when in her fits she named one J. K., a woman living in the neighbouring bounds, of whom she said, that she had seen her in the church; as also that she was master of these kind of fits she was afflicted with; withal asserting, that if the said J. K. were not sent for, she would grow worse and worse; which her parents finding to be true, sent in the evening for the said J. K., threatening her, if the damsel was any further troubled with her, that she should be apprehended as others had been; after which the damsel being in the mean time in a very sore fit, the forementioned J. K. prayed (though not desired) that God might send the damsel her health; whereupon the damsel was no more troubled with these kind of fits; but did instantly recover, by falling into a swoon as she used to do before recovery out of any of her fits.

“Tuesday, being March 16th, she was again seized with her other kind of fits, all the parts of her body being stiff and rigid; and sometimes in them was heard conversing

with the gentlewoman (as she called her) vindicating herself of what the gentlewoman alleged against her, *viz.* that she had accused some innocent persons as her tormentors. To which the damsel distinctly replied, that she was a liar, saying, it was you yourself and none other ever mentioned any such thing.

“Thus she continued until the Friday thereafter, being never free of the light fits, now and then also falling into swoons, and appeared to be almost choaked by the means of some charms and enchantments invisibly conveyed into her mouth; which, to the apprehension of spectators, were as if it had been pieces of chestnuts, orange pills, whites of eggs, or such like, all which were distinctly observed, when occasionally in the fit she opened her mouth; and when spectators essayed to get them out, she kept her mouth and teeth so close, that no strength could open the same. When recovered out of the fit, she told L. M., a woman living in the neighbouring bounds, had put them in her mouth.

“Upon Friday, being March 19th, she was violently tormented with sore fits, in which her neck was distorted and bended back like a bow towards her heels, struggling with feet and hands, sometimes stiff, blind, and deaf, putting out of her mouth a great number of small pins; which she said the forementioned L. M. had put in her mouth. And about six o'clock that same night being violently tormented, she fell a-crying, that if the gentlewoman was not apprehended that night, it would be in vain to apprehend her to-morrow: for, said she, I have much to suffer at her hands betwixt twelve and one o'clock in the morning. After this the damsel lifting up her eyelids with her hands, and looking upwards, said, what art thou that tells me that the sheriff and my father are coming here this night? After which the sheriff, her father, and James Guthrie, macer to the justiciary court, instantly came up stairs, to the amazement of those who remembered what the damsel just now had said. The damsel continuing all this while blind and deaf; yet was heard (the foresaid persons being



present) distinctly to discourse with some invisible being near to her, saying, is the sheriff come, is he near me? and stretching out her hand to feel if any were about her, the sheriff put his hand in her's, notwithstanding of which she said to the invisible being discoursing with her, 'I cannot feel the sheriff, how can he be present here? or how can I have him by the hand as thou sayest, seeing I feel it not? Thou sayest he hath brown-coloured cloaths, red plush breeches with black stripes, flowered muslin cravat, and an embroidered sword belt. Thou sayest there is an old grey-haired man with him, having a ring upon his hand; but I can neither see nor feel any of them. What, are they come to apprehend the gentlewoman? is that their errand indeed?' And the girl being inquired how she came to the knowledge of these strange things; replied as formerly in the like case, something speaking distinctly as above her head, suggested them to her. It is very observable here, that the foresaid persons had that same afternoon got an order from the commissioners of justiciary to apprehend the same gentlewoman, and were so far on their way to put it in execution against the next morning; but being witnesses to the damsel's trouble, and hearing what she had told, *viz.* that a delay in that matter, would prove to her exceeding dangerous, they went straight on in their journey that same night to the gentlewoman's habitation, and put their warrant to execution.

"As the damsel still continued to be violently tormented, sometimes lying with her neck and other parts of her body upon the ground, as if they had been disjointed; sometimes also essaying to throw herself into the fire. About ten o'clock the same night, she continuing in the fit, her father (who had not gone with the sheriff) beginning to read a part of the word of God, she repeated the words after him though blind and deaf in the mean time, which made spectators apprehend, that the damsel had the sense of hearing in these sorts of fits, at least when the word of God was read: to find out the truth of which, her father did cease from reading, which though he did; yet the

damsel continued to repeat the following verses of the chapter, while none in the room were reading, and she herself had no book ; withal being heard say to some invisible being about her, Wilt thou teach me a part of the Old Testament as well as the New.

“ The damsel still continuing in the forementioned fits, said unto the persons present, that now it was twelve of the clock ; oh ! it is now past twelve, sometimes lying as one dead, through the violence of pain and decay of her natural spirits, sometimes again recovering, essayed to express somewhat, but could not ; withal putting out of her mouth a great quantity of crooked pins, and the parts of her body being prodigiously distorted, she complained of great pain ; thus she continued until half an hour after twelve o’clock at night ; when on a sudden she recovered, to the admiration of beholders, telling them, she might now go to bed, being told by some invisible informer, that the sheriff and the other gentleman, to wit, the macer, had now entered the gentlewoman’s house, and accordingly going to bed, was no further troubled that night. It is worthy of remark here, that the sheriff and macer, at their return, did declare, that it was just about that time they entered the gentlewoman’s house, which the damsel condescended upon.

“ Saturday, being March 20th, about ten o’clock in the forenoon, she was of a sudden seized with fits, falling down as one dead, her eyes quite closed, sometimes again opening and turning in her head, she saw nor heard none about her, but was hurried with violence to and fro through the room, crying with a loud voice when any by force would hinder her motion. She being in this posture, and deprived thus of her senses, James Lindsay, one of the three confessants, was brought into the room, who no sooner had entered the door but was perceived by her, and she, smiling, ran towards him, saying, Jamie, where hast thou been this long time, how is it with thee ? and answered him distinctly to every word he spake, though at the same time she neither heard nor saw any other in the room, nor could

converse with them, albeit, tried by several experiments for that purpose, particularly a tobacco box being held before her eyes by a person present in the room, she did not see it; but as soon as it was put in the hand of James Lindsay she instantly inquired at him, where he had got that box? She continuing in this posture, the sheriff and her father being present, thought it fit to confront M. M. who was now come, thereby to try if the damsel would hear or see her, as she had done James Lindsay, which accordingly they did: and as soon as M. M. entered the door, the damsel (though still in the fit) presently smiled and said, I see the gentlewoman now, though formerly she had never seen her personally, but only her spectre in the fits. She likewise heard her, when she spoke to her, answering distinctly some questions proposed by M. M., such as, when it was she had seen her tormenting her? to which she answered, she had seen her the other night in her fits, and further challenged her, why she had restrained her from making known the Highland wife's name, as also saying unto her, thou pretends thou knowest not what I say, thou knowest well enough. Upon all which, the gentlewoman on a sudden (without being desired) prayed, that the Lord might send the damsel her health, saying, 'Lord help thee, poor daft child, and rebuke the Devil.' Which words were no sooner uttered than the damsel fell down as dead, and being in this posture carried to another room, instantly recovered of the blind, deaf, and also of the light fit, becoming perfectly well, and continued so for some time, and being thus recovered, and M. M. removed into another room, the damsel was inquired at, whom she had seen in the last fit? to which she replied, she had seen the gentlewoman, though in the mean time she was altogether ignorant of the gentlewoman's ever being personally present in the room with her.

"The same day the commissioners of justiciary having come to Bargarran, M. M. and the damsel were again confronted, upon which the damsel (being in the light fit) upon the first look of the forementioned M. M. was sud-

denly seized with sore fits, out of which when she recovered, she accused her as being one of her most violent tormentors, particularly mentioning such and such times, in which she had in an extraordinary manner afflicted her, as also what words she spoke in her hearing while in the fit, and which is yet more remarkable, did question the gentlewoman if she did not some time in December last, when she was tormenting her, remember how she went away from her in great haste, saying, she could stay no longer, being obliged to attend a child's burial at home. In confirmation of which we are very credibly informed, that W. R., a near neighbour of her's, had a child buried that same day, and that the gentlewoman came not in due time to attend the corpse to the burial place, but the corpse being near to the church-yard ere she reached the house from whence they came, she returned again to her own lodging, and so did not accompany the burial at all.

"The Lord's day following, being March 21st, she fell into swooning fits, complaining of no pain, except near to her heart, falling down as dead, not only when the fits seized her, but also when she recovered, sometimes singing after an unusual manner, withal informing spectators that J. G. constrained her to that kind of music, her own lips not at all moving in the mean time, which beholders saw to be true, only her tongue, for preventing of which, she frequently put her hand into her mouth. And at this time, when either she herself, or those about her, offered to read any part of the Scripture, she was violently tormented, declaring if she did but so much as hear the word of God read that day, she would certainly be extremely tortured; in confirmation of which, when some essayed to read Heb. xi 2, 4, 6. Isa. xl. Psalm iii. she uttered horrid screechs and outcries, complaining that she was pinched, in evidence of which, the prints or marks of the nails of fingers were distinctly seen on her arms, and being thus pinched or bitten for several times with great violence and pain, the skin itself was seen to be torn from off those parts of her arms and fingers, where the prints of

the teeth and nails were observed; so that from the deepness of the wounds, the foresaid parts affected fell a-bleeding, which blood was both seen and handled by spectators. Moreover the damsel, while in this sad and lamentable condition, seemed to be extremely affected and oppressed with sore sickness, as one in a fever, crying sometimes, to remove these dead children out of her sight; which she frequently repeated, from six to nine in the morning, and she still continuing the rest of the day, it was observed that some charms and enchantments were put in her mouth as formerly, of which the damsel being very sensible, fell down on a sudden on the ground, putting her hand to some spittle which she had put out of her mouth, and lifted some trash which she again cast down to the ground, it making some noise, but yet neither seen in her spittle nor elsewhere by spectators, though while in her mouth, they observed something like orange pills, whites of eggs, and pieces of chestnuts.

“Monday, being March 22d, the forementioned L. M. or J. G. came to Bargarran’s house, and being confronted with the damsel, questioned her if ever she had seen her in any of her fits, withal alleging that she, *viz.* L. M. or J. G. could be none of her tormentors, because the damsel was not now seized with a fit, though looking upon her as she used to be, when she looked upon any of her other tormentors when confronted with them; upon which the damsel being for some time silent, L. M. or J. G. did again propose the same question to her; to which the damsel distinctly replied, Yes; upon which L. M. replied, perhaps you have seen the devil in my shape.

“As to the conference there are several things exceeding remarkable, as first, that the damsel upon her answering, Yes, was immediately seized with a fit. 2dly, That however, after Katherine Campbell had touched the damsel in presence of the commissioners, upon the 5th of Feb. last, she had ever since that time, freedom to touch any of her tormentors, without being seized with her fits, as has been hinted, yet true it is, that in the room of that

charm a new one took place, *viz.* when any time she looked upon her tormentors in the face, at the very first look she was seized with her fits; which charm she declared was laid by means of the forementioned L. M. or J. G., and also taken off again by her that very morning before she came to visit the damsel, and this she said, was suggested to her by some invisible being, speaking distinctly as it were above her head; and that therefore the damsel now had freedom to look L. M. in the face, without being seized with fits, which for a considerable time before, she could not do, when confronted with any of her tormentors. 3dly, It is yet more observable, that in the same morning before ever L. M. came to visit the damsel, it was told by the damsel to several persons in the family, that L. M. had taken off that charm of her being seized with fits, when looking any of her tormentors in the face; but withal, that she had laid on another in its room, *viz.* that as soon as the damsel should by words confer with any of her tormentors, so soon should she be seized with a fit, which accordingly was verified when she spoke to L. M. or J. G.

“Tuesday, being March 23d, the damsel being asleep in the bed with her mother, about three o'clock in the morning, was on a sudden awakened (having for some time struggled in her sleep) in great fear and consternation, and being seized with her blind and deaf fits, took fast hold of her mother, declaring to her father and her, that the Devil was standing near to the bed assaulting her, upon which she cried suddenly: ‘God Almighty keep me from thy meetings. I will die rather than go to them. I will never, through the grace of God, renounce my baptism; for I will certainly go to hell if I do it; thou says I will go to hell however, because I am a great sinner; but I believe what the word of God saith; though I have many sins, yet the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin: and I will not add that great wickedness to my other sins, which thou art tempting me to do. It is no wonder thou lie to me, seeing thou wast bold to lie in God’s face. I



know thou art a liar from the beginning ; and the red coat thou promises me, I know thou canst not perform it. And although I should never recover, I am never resolved to renounce my baptism. It is God that hath kept me all this time from being a witch, and I trust, he will yet by his grace keep me ; not because of anything in me, but of his own mercy ; and that he who hath kept me hitherto from being devoured by thee, I hope will yet keep me.' This conference continued near the space of an hour, her father, mother, and others being ear witnesses to the same. And after recovery the damsel declared that it was the Devil, who, (in the shape of a naked man with a shirt, having much hair upon his hands, and his face like swine's bristles) had appeared to her tempting her as aforesaid.

"Until Sabbath following she continued in the light fit, but withal every morning and evening was still seized with her sore fits, continuing still to name M. M. (who was at this time set at liberty) ; the forementioned L. M., E. T., an Highland wife, and others as being her tormentors. It is more than remarkable here, that M. M. being set at liberty upon bail, the very day after she went home, she appeared again to the damsel tormenting her in her fits, and continued so to do several days thereafter, particularly upon the Saturday, being March 27, after she was set at liberty ; the which day the damsel was heard name her in the fits, and say to her, ' Wilt thou say, God help me, poor mad or foolish child, as thou said the other day before the judges: art thou wishing the Devil to take me; where is the habit thou was cloathed in the other day ?'

"On Sabbath morning, being March 28th, the damsel through God's great mercy towards her, was perfectly recovered, both of all her sore and light fits ; becoming as well, sensible, and composed as ever.

"If it shall be questioned, how the truth of all these strange things is attested ? There is none of those particulars mentioned in the Narrative, but had in the first draught, the witnesses inserted at the end of every parti-

cular paragraph, and attested before the commissioners for inquiry at Renfrew, by the subscriptions of the respective witnesses. But seeing the placing of them so now, would have occasioned the repetition of several persons' names over and over again, and would have made this Narrative swell too much in bulk; therefore we judged it fittest now to set down the names altogether at the end of the Narrative; and the rather, that seeing these things fell not out in a private corner; but thousands in this country have been eye and ear witnesses thereof, to their admiration and raising of their sympathy, and been fully convinced beyond all debate, of a diabolical influence upon the affliction of the damsel: we shall now make mention of a few, *viz.* beside the father, mother, grandmother, and nearest relations of the damsel, and servants of the family, who were always present with her in her fits; such of the commissioners for inquiry and of justiciary as had occasion to be on the place of the events, particularly the Lord Blantyre, Mr. Francis Montgomery of Giffen, Sir John Maxwell of Pollok, Sir John Houstoun of that ilk, Alexander Porterfield of that ilk, the Laird of Blackhall younger, the Laird of Glanderstone, the Laird of Craigens, Porterfield of Fulwood, John Alexander of Blackhouse, Mr. Robert Semple, sheriff-depute of Renfrew: and several other honourable persons of good sense and prying wits; such as the noble Earl of Marshall, the Laird of Orbistone, the Laird of Kilmarnock, the Laird of Meldrum, the Laird of Bishopton, elder and younger; Gavin Cochrane of Craigmure, William Denniston of Colgrain, Dr. Matthew Brisbane, &c. and many ministers, who kept days of humiliation and prayer weekly to the family, and sometimes in the parish church with the congregation, *viz.* Mr. James Hutchison, minister of the Gospel at Kilellan, Mr. Patrick Simpson at Renfrew, Mr. James Stirling at Kilbarchan, Mr. Thomas Blackwell,\*

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\* " Author of the *Schema Sacrum* and *Ratio Sacra*, and afterwards Professor of Divinity in the University of Aberdeen."

at Paisley, Mr. James Brisbane at Kilmacolm, Mr. Robt. Taylor at Houstoun; and of neighbouring presbyteries, Mr. Neil Gillies, Mr. James Brown, Mr. John Gray, minister of the Gospel at Glasgow, while the damsel was there; Mr. John Ritchie, minister at Old Kilpatrick, Mr. Alexander King, at Bonhill, Mr. Archibald Wallace, at Cardross, Mr. John Anderson, at Drymmon, Mr. Andrew Turner, minister of the place, who was frequently there: besides Mr. Menzies of Cammo, and Mr. Grant of Cullen, advocates, who were eye and ear witnesses to several important passages of the damsel's affliction, and the convincing evidences of its flowing from the operation of the Devil, and his instruments. The truth whereof is further adminiculat by the progress and issue of the trial, at which were present at several occasions, not only Sir John Shaw of Greenock, Commissar Smollet, at Bonhill, Mr. John Stewart, advocate, who were concerned in the commission, with these others before-mentioned: but also great confluence of several nobility and gentry out of the country, such as the Earl of Glencairn, the Lord Kilmaurs, the Lord Semple," &c.

Hugo Arnot, in his celebrated collection of Criminal Trials, when speaking of the Bargarran case, has the following remarks:—

"Some years after, an impostor appeared, in the character of a person tormented by witches, Christian Shaw, daughter of John Shaw of Bargarran, a gentleman of some note in the county of Renfrew. She is said to have been but eleven years of age, and although it is probable that hysterical affections may in part have occasioned her rhapsodies to proceed from real illusion, as well as accounted for the contortions which agitated her body; yet she seems to have displayed an artifice above her years, and address superior to her situation, and to have been aided by accomplices, which dullness of apprehension, or violence of prejudice, forbade the bystanders to discover."

"The lamentable case of the afflicted damsel and family, had been represented to his Majesty's most honour-

able privy council, and on the 19th of January, 1697, a warrant of Privy Council was issued,\* which set forth, that there were pregnant grounds of suspicion of Witchcraft in the shire of Renfrew, especially from the afflicted and extraordinary condition of Christian Shaw, daughter of John Shaw of Bargarran. It therefore granted commission to Alexander Lord Blantyre, Sir John Maxwell of Pollok, Sir John Shaw of Greenock, William Cunningham of Craighs, Alexander Porterfield of Duchall, ——— Caldwell of Glanderstoun, Gavin Cochrane of Thornly-muir, Alexander Porterfield of Fulwood, and Robert Semple, sheriff-depute of Renfrew, or any five of them, to interrogate and imprison persons suspected of Witchcraft, to examine witnesses, &c., but not upon oath, and to transmit their report before the 10th of March, 1697. The act of Privy Council is subscribed thus, ‘Polwarth, *Cancellar*, Argyle, Leven, Forfar, Raith, Belhaven, Ja. Stewart, J. Hope, W. Anstruther, J. Maxwell, Ro. Sinclair.’

“ ‘The commissioners for inquiry, having met at Bargarran in February 1697, did choose the Lord Blantyre, preses, and took the confession of Elizabeth Anderson, aged about seventeen years, as follows, Declares ‘that about seven years ago, she staid with Jean Fulton her grandmother, and playing about the door she saw a black grim man go in to her grandmother’s house: after which, her grandmother came to the door, called her in, and desired her to take the gentleman (as she named him) by the hand, and which she did, but finding it very cold, became afraid; and immediately he vanished. About a month thereafter, her grandmother and she being in the house together, the said gentleman (whom she then suspected to be the Devil,) appeared to them, and fell a talking with her grandmother, by rounding in one another’s ears; upon which the grandmother desired her to take him by the hand, being a friend of hers; but Elizabeth

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\* Records of Privy Council, 19th January, 1697.

refusing, the grandmother threatened, that she would get none of the cloaths promised to her, unless she should obey: yet Elizabeth withstood, saying, 'the Lord be between me and him,' whereupon he went away in a flight; but she knew not how. Elizabeth was not troubled for a long time thereafter, till her father desiring her to go with him a begging through the country; and she saying, that she needed not to seek her meat, seeing she might have work; her father pressed her to go alongst, and took her to a moor in Kilmalcolm, where were gathered together, at that and other subsequent meetings, Katherine Campbell, Margaret Fulton (her grand-aunt,) Margaret Lang, John Reid, smith, Margaret and Janet Rodgers, the three Lindsays, (besides the two confessant ones), &c., and severals whom she did not know, and the foresaid gentleman with them. He came to Elizabeth, bidding her to renounce her baptism, promising that if she would consent thereunto, she should get better meat and cloaths, and not need to beg. But, (as she declared) she would not consent. Then he inquired what brought her hither, she answered, that she came with her father: whereupon the Devil and her father went and talked together apart: but she knew not whereabouts. Declares, that in that meeting was concerted the tormenting of Mr. William Fleeming, minister at Innerkip, his child. Elizabeth confesses she was at another meeting with that crew above the town of Kilpatrick, with the foresaid gentleman, whom they called their lord: and that she went with her father to the ferry boat of Erskine; where the Devil with the rest of the band overturned the boat, and drowned the Laird of Brighouse, and the ferrier of Erskine, with several special circumstances thereanent; particularly that some of the crew would have saved the ferrier, but one of them, *viz.* his mother-in-law gainstood it, in regard he had expelled her out of his house a little while before the meeting. Acknowledges, she was present with them at the destroying of William Montgomerie's child, by strangling it with a sea napkin: where they having entered the

house, lighted a candle, which was somewhat bluish, and Agnes Naismith saying, what if the people awake? Margaret Fulton replied, ye need not fear: as also declares, that about five weeks before the date, her father brought her on foot to Bargarran orchard, into which they entered by a slap in the dyke, and where were present the persons before-named, &c., and the Devil, who told that nobody would see them, at which they laughed. At this meeting, they, with their lord, contrived the destruction of Christian Shaw: some being for stabbing her with a touck, others for hanging her with a cord, a third sort for choaking her, and some intended to have her out of the house to destroy her: but fearing they might be taken before the next meeting to that effect, their lord (as they called him,) gave them a piece of an unchristened child's liver to eat, (but the declarant and the other two confessants slipped the eating of it,) telling them, that though they were apprehended, they should never confess, which would prevent an effectual discovery: and further, severals of them being afraid that the declarant would confess, and tell of them as she had done formerly on her grandmother, they threatened to tear her all in pieces if she did so; and particularly, Margaret Lang threatened her most. After two hours or thereby, they disappeared in a flight, except the declarant, who went home on her foot. Confesses likewise, that one night her father raised her out of her bed, and they having gone to the water side, took her on his back, and carried her over the river in a flight; from whence they went on foot to Dumbarton, and in Mr. John Hardy, minister, his yard, the crew and their lord being met, they formed the picture of Mr. Hardy, and dabbed it full of pins, and having put it amongst water and ale mixed, roasted it on a spit at a fire, &c. After which her father and herself returned in the same manner as they went. Declares the particular persons that were employed and most industrious in the several facts before-mentioned, &c.

“James Lindsay, aged 14 years, declares, ‘That one



day he met with the deceast Jean Fulton his grandmother, at her own house, where she took from him a little round cape and a plack; but being grieved, he required them from her again, and she refusing, he called her an old witch and ran away, upon which she followed him and cried that she should meet him with an ill turn. About three days thereafter, he being a begging in the country, he met his grandmother with a black grim man, &c., whom she desired him to take by the hand, which James did, but found it exceeding cold, and was straitly griped, whereupon the said gentleman (as she termed him) asked the declarant if he would serve him, and obey him, and he should have a coat, hat, and several other things, to which James answered, 'Yes, I'll do it.' And after this the foresaid gentleman (whom the declarant knew thereafter to be the Devil), and his grandmother went away, but knows not how. Acknowledges he was frequently thereafter at meetings with the Devil and witches, particularly these mentioned in Elizabeth Anderson's confession: that their lord came to James at the first public meeting, took him by the hand, and forebade him to tell: that they contrived before-hand at the said meeting, the drowning of Brighthouse, and concurs with Elizabeth Anderson anent the design of saving the ferrier, which his mother-in-law did divert. He being interrogate, declared he did not see J. K. and J. W. at committing of the foresaid fact: (and indeed they were then in prison) that they with a cord strangled Matthew Park's child: and that the person who waited on the child, finding it stifled, cried out, Matthew! Matthew! the bairn is dead: Elizabeth Anderson concurs in this particular; and tells, that when they had done, they took the cord with them. Declares, that he was present at strangling William Montgomerie's child with a sea napkin, and heard Agnes Naismith say, 'draw the loup,' &c. That about five weeks since, he was carried to them in Bargarran's orchard, and concurs with Elizabeth Anderson in what was treated there, anent destroying Christian Shaw, and the charm against confess-

ing. Likewise the meeting in Dumbarton, anent Mr Hardy, is acknowledged by him: and that he has several times appeared to Christian Shaw both in Glasgow and Bargarran, with the others that did torment her, and put in her mouth, coal cinders, bones, hay, hair, sticks, &c., intending thereby to choak her; that he and they did oftentimes prick and stab her in this manner, *viz.*, he had a needle, which if he put in his cloaths, her body would be pricked and stabbed in that place where he fixed the needle, and if he put in his hair, that part of her head would be tormented: that he saw her put out the pins they had put in, at which time he cried these words, Help J. D., who was also then present; that when the ministers began to pray in Bargarran's house at several occasions, the Devil and they immediately went away,' &c.

“Thomas Lindsay being below pupilarity, declares, ‘the same Jean Fulton, his grandmother, awaked him one night out of his bed, and caused him take a black grim gentleman (as she called him) by the hand; which he felt to be cold; and who having inquired if Thomas would serve him and be his man, and he would give him a red coat, the declarant consented: and the gentleman (whom he knew thereafter to be the Devil) gave him a nip in the neck, which continued sore for ten days. Thereafter, one day after his grandmother's decease, coming by her house, he thought she appeared to him clapping his head, and desiring him to be a good servant to the gentleman to whom she had gifted him, and forbidding him to reveal it. Declares, that one night lying in bed in the house of one Robert Shaw, he was awakened out of his sleep and carried in a flight to Matthew Park's house, where were present the particular persons named by him, and concurs to the manner of strangling of the child with James Lindsay his brother: and that another night, being in the house of Walter Alexander, he was brought to the strangling of William Montgomerie's child, and agrees likewise in the manner of it with his brother, only he says, the sea napkin with which they committed the fact, was speckled. He likewise con-

curs as to the meeting in Bargarran's orchard, about five weeks ago, and what was acted therein : as also anent Mr Hardy ; with this addition, that himself turned the spit whereon the picture was roasted,' &c.

"It is to be noticed, that the three confessants were separately apprehended upon several occasions, so they (after the obstinacy to discover was abated) did emit these confessions in several distinct places, without communication with, or knowledge of another's confession in manner mentioned in the preceding Narrative. The commissioners did examine them upon other trying questions that were new, thereby to make experiment of their consonancy or disagreement : but still found them strangely to accord. The facts did fall out in the manner declared by them, particularly the strangling of the children, death of the minister, drowning of those in the boat, and torture of Bargarran's daughter mentioned in the confessions before expressed. Further, the commissioners did confront them both with Christian Shaw, the afflicted girl, and the persons declared, (whom they caused apprehend) and both the girl and confessants did accuse these to their faces, and bind them in circumstances with great steadiness and congruity, though separately brought in. The commissioners did also try some experiments anent the girl, her falling in fits on approach of the accused, as is expressed in the Narrative ; and examined her, with those who staid commonly about her upon the particulars of her sufferings : they tried to cause her write (since she could not say out) the name of a person whom she first called Margaret or pinched Maggie, and asserted to be one of her chief bourriers ; yet upon writing Margaret, and the letter L of her surname, the girl was presently taken with a fearful convulsion, the pen being struck out of her hand, and herself falling as dead, with groans heavier and sorer than ordinary : after some recovery, whereof some ministers pointed to her a passage of the Bible, but upon essaying to cast her eyes on it, she fell into vehement pangs, till one of the commissioners desired the book might be closed, and that being

done, she immediately came to herself, &c. Lastly, the commissioners called before them those persons who had signed the passages of the several days in the written journal of the girl's sufferings: and having examined them thereupon, transmitted the same with the declarations of the three confessants, and several of the passages that occurred in the precognition, to his Majesty's privy council, by whom they were appointed for that effect.

"The commissioners represented that there were *twenty-four persons male and female suspected and accused of Witchcraft*, and that further inquiry ought to be made into this crime."\*

Among these unhappy objects of suspicion, it is to be remarked, that there was a girl of fourteen, and a boy not twelve years of age.

"Agreeable to this report, a new warrant was issued by the Privy Council on the 5th April, 1697,† to most of the commissioners formerly named, with the addition of Lord Halleraig; Mr. Francis Montgomery of Giffen, Sir John Houston of that ilk, Mr. John Kincaid of Corsbasket, Advocate, and Mr. John Stewart, younger of Blackhall, Advocate, or any five of them, to meet at Renfrew, Paisley, or Glasgow, to take trial of, *judge, and do justice* upon the foresaid persons; and to sentence the guilty *to be burned, or otherwise executed to death*, as the commissioners should incline. It further ordained the commissioners to transmit to the court of justiciary an authentic extract of their proceedings, to be entered upon its records; and contained a recommendation to the Lords of the Treasury to defray the expenses of the trial. The Act of Privy Council is subscribed thus, 'Polwarth, *Cancellor*, Douglas, Lauderdale, Annandale, Yester, Kintore, Carmichael, W. Anstruther, Arch. Mure.'

"The commissioners, thus empowered, were not remiss in acting under the authority delegated to them.

\* "Vide Records of Privy Council, 9th March, 1697."

† "Vide Records of Privy Council, 5th April, 1697."

After twenty hours were spent in the examination of witnesses, *who gave testimony* that the malefices\* libelled could not have proceeded from natural causes, and that the prisoners were the authors of these malefices—after five of the unhappy prisoners confessed their own guilt, and criminated their alleged associates—after counsel had been heard on both sides, and the counsel for the prosecution had declared that ‘he would not press the jury with the *ordinary severity* of threatening an *assize of error*,’ but recommended to them to proceed according to the evidence; and loudly declared to them, that although they ought to beware of condemning the innocent, yet if they should acquit the prisoners, in opposition to legal evidence, ‘*they would be accessory to all the blasphemies, apostacies, murders, tortures, and seductions, whereof these enemies of heaven and earth should hereafter be guilty.*’ After the jury had spent six hours in deliberation, seven of those miserable persons were condemned to the flames.†

“During the dependence of the trial, Janet and Margaret Rodgers confessed in this manner; the commissioners had adjourned for two several diets, and though they were to meet on the third, yet it was not expected that they would proceed till providence might clear the prisoners’ guilt by further testimonies of those who might come to confess. The very morning of the third term, the Rodgers did confess, which was a surprise to every one that came up to attend the court, since these, as they were women, and were not formerly noticed as others were: so they confessed of free motion, without any person’s desiring it of them at the time; they had not such

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\* Malefices, in the Scotch law, signifies an act or effect of Witchcraft. —*Arnot’s Criminal Trials.*

† “The order of Privy Council for recording the commissioners’ proceedings in the books of justiciary not being complied with, further particulars of the catastrophe of these miserable persons, or of the criminal absurdity of those who committed them to the flames cannot now be given.”—*Ibid.*

means of instruction as were administered to others: and the conjuncture of many circumstances was altogether singular. Their confessions did coincide as to the meetings and things acted therein, with the three former confessants, and the other evidences of the visible matters of fact: only they were so pointed as to condescend upon some of the pannels whom they did not see at these rendezvouses; and great care was taken, to compare their testimonies which had been already discovered, and to expiscate their certain knowledge, by new interrogators, when they were separate from one another, &c. The whole crisis had such an evidence, that now the commissioners, with the general approbation of the most intelligent of the country, who came in to attend the court, allowed the going on of the process to debate of the relevancy, and putting seven of the best known criminals, for whom an advocate appeared, to the knowledge of an inquest: according whereunto there were some days allowed for the pannels giving in their informations upon the relevancy; and at the term, there was a great time spent in adducing the probation.\*

“ Upon the 21st of May, 1697, after the trial of the seven witches, there is an attestation subscribed by Mr Patrick Simpson, minister at Renfrew, Walter Scott, bailie there, &c., of this import, John Reid, smith in Inchinnan, prisoner, did in presence of the said persons and some others, declare, that about a year ago the Devil (whom he knew to be such thereafter) appeared to him when he was travelling in the night time, but spoke none to him at the first encounter. At the second appearance he gave him a bite or nip in his loin, which he found painful for a fortnight. That the third time he appeared to him as a black man, &c., desired him to engage in his service upon assurance of getting gear and comfort in the world; since he should not want any thing that he would ask in the Devil's name: and then he renounced his baptism, putting

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\* See Appendix, B.



the one hand to the crown of his head, and the other to the sole of his foot, thereby giving himself up to Satan's service, after which the pain of the bite or nip ceased. He told that hitherto there were no others present; but thereafter he was at several meetings, particularly that in Bargarran's yard, about the time when there was a fast for Christian Shaw; where the Devil appeared in the same kind of garb as he first appeared to him, and they consulted Christian's death, either by worrying or drowning her in the well; and the Devil said, he should warrant them, that they should neither be heard, seen, nor confess; to which end he gave every one of them a bit of flesh, that the declarant got, but let it fall and did not eat it. Thereafter in the presence of the laird of Jordanhill, the minister, Mr. Andrew Cochran, town clerk, and bailie Paterson, he owned his former confessions: and being inquired of Jordanhill how they were advertised of their meetings, he said that ordinarily at their meetings the time of the next was appointed; but for particular warning there appeared a black dog with a chain about his neck, who tinkling it, they were to follow, &c. And being inquired by the minister, if he did now wholly renounce the Devil (for he had formerly told how Satan had not performed his promise) and give himself to Jesus Christ, and desire to find mercy of God through him: he assented thereunto. It is to be observed that John Reid, after his confession, had called out of the prison window, desiring bailie Scott to keep that old body, Angus Forrester, who had been his fellow prisoner, close and secure; whereupon the company asked John, when they were leaving him, on Friday's night the 21st of May, whether he desired company, or would be afraid alone, he said he had no fear of any thing. So being left till Saturday's forenoon, he was found in this posture, *viz.*, sitting upon a stool, which was on the hearth of the chimney, with his feet on the floor and his body straight upward, his shoulders touching the lintel of the chimney, but his neck tied with his own neckcloth (whereof the knot was behind) to a

small stick thrust into a clift above the lintel of the chimney; upon which the company, especially John Campbell, a surgeon, who was called, though at first in respect of his being in an ordinary posture of sitting, and the neck-cloth not having any run loup, but an ordinary knot, which was not very straight, and the stick not having the strength to bear the weight of his body or the struggle, that he had not been quite dead; but finding it otherwise, and that he was in such a situation, that he could not have been the actor thereof himself, concluded that some extraordinary cause had done it, especially, considering that the door of the room was secured, and that there was a board set over the window, which was not there the night before when they left him.”\*

In this most remarkable case, which we have quoted in full, it is a difficult matter to decide, whether the artifice of the unhappy girl, or the credulity of the individuals who listened to her story, is the more extraordinary. It will be seen that the writer himself was at least deeply imbued with a belief in the existence of Witchcraft. This has given a warmth of expression to the narrative, and sometimes led him to conclusions which the facts of the case did not admit. It is difficult to shake off early prejudices, and we are too often led to look up to the wisdom of our ancestors, as to an infallible rule which knows no improvement. In these cases reason is opposed by artful sophisms, and the lights which a more advanced state of mental knowledge may occasionally bring into view, are esteemed, not so much the emanations of progressing intelligence, as the daring inroads of ambitious or restless minds.

It is not our intention to remark on the introductory part of the narrative further than to observe, that the argu-

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\* According to tradition, the body of John Reid was taken from the cell in which he had been confined, to the head of the jail stair, down which it was drawn by the feet, and placed upon a car, which, together with his body, was burned in a field adjoining to the town, which is still pointed out by the inhabitants of Renfrew.

ments adduced by its author are deeply marked with the spirit of the times, arguing an unsound faith in the perfections of the Deity, and giving vent to unbecoming sentiments of Him whose kingdom ruleth over all. In these days of darkness and superstition, ignorant men looked up with confidence to those whom they esteemed better informed than themselves, and submitted without inquiry to whatever that class, in their arrogance, might suggest, while the powerful, on the contrary, too often imagined, that the instruction of the ignorant would be the sure means of narrowing their influence over them. The intervention of supernatural beings was not only favourably received by the uninformed populace, but the clergy gave countenance to the superstitions of the age, by offering up prayers for persons said to be under the influence of Witchcraft. Sheriffs went from place to place, inquiring into and taking note of anything that a diseased or alarmed imagination might communicate. Judges sat in solemn conclave on the often malicious information thus collected, and the consigning of innocent individuals to the stake, was in general the result of their deliberations.

It must be obvious to the attentive reader, that the afflictions of Christian Shaw, whether real or supposed, bear a striking resemblance to the sufferings of a person labouring under a peculiar species of bodily or mental disease; and even taking it for granted, that the accounts we have of her fits were not exaggerated by interested individuals, they do not exceed in extravagance and variety many of the cases reported, in our own times, in the annals of medical science, and attested by the most unquestionable authority. There is one feature in the case of Christian Shaw which seems to have been very common in the cases of supposed Witchcraft, namely, that of the emissaries of the Evil One, by invisible means, conveying quantities of pins into the mouths of the afflicted individuals, for the purpose of increasing their torment and gratifying the malignity of their cruel persecutors. This favourite amusement of the Witches was, however, less painful, and the pins

rendered more easy of being concealed in the mouth, or evacuated from it at the pleasure of the patient, by being bent or crooked; an improvement which we could scarcely have expected, if the pins had been used only as instruments of torture. This proof of a person being bewitched was had recourse to by persons whose only aim was to bring disgrace and punishment on others who had become the object of their envy or their hate. Instances have been detected of individuals under examination, artfully conveying pins into the mouth, for the purpose of impressing upon the minds of the judges by whom they were examined the truth of their assertions. A single detection of that kind, ought to have made judges of ordinary discernment treat similar exhibitions with the contempt and punishment such temerity deserved.

In those days, when Witchcraft was not only believed in by the ignorant, but when penal laws were in full force for the punishment of Witches, and where the evidence of a second person was not considered necessary, to bring the last sentence of the law on the head of the person accused; malicious persons had only to assert that they had pains in certain parts of their body, inflicted on them by some person or persons with whom they were at enmity, and whom they affirmed were in the same apartment with them, although at the very moment the accused parties might be many miles distant. The world has never yet been without persons of a malicious disposition, and when a belief in Witchcraft possessed the minds, not only of our peasantry, but of our lawgivers, malice never had so wide a field whereon to work her fearful cruelties. Every artifice was used, and every stratagem adopted, for the purpose of effecting the most diabolical schemes.

In Bargarran house, the scene where Christian Shaw exhibited her fantastic tricks, the most ingenious modes were had recourse to for the purpose of deception; these she performed before many witnesses, who visited her with minds prepared to receive everything as truth which she was pleased to communicate. In the upper part of the

house are two rooms, separated by a partition of pannelled oak, in the smallest of which stands an oaken bedstead, richly carved and bearing date "1672."

This was the sleeping apartment of that unhappy girl. The principal room, the walls of which are still hung with tapestry, on which are delineated some curious landscapes, though fast falling into decay, has a communication with the bedroom by means of a slanting hole made in the partition, and which is placed near the head of what had been Christian Shaw's bed. It is about an inch and a half in diameter, and passes in an oblique direction from the large room through the partition, and in such a position, that when the bed was made up, those who were in the bedroom might not be able to see it. We at first imagined that a knot\* in the wood had fallen out, but on examination it was found to have been made by artificial means, and the natural conclusion was, that it had been done for some invidious purpose. Had the partition been perforated in a direct manner, the light from the principal room would have been clearly discernible from the bed room, but it is so cunningly contrived, that even if the eye had rested on it, the hole would hardly have been perceptible. Supposing, then, Christian Shaw to have had an accomplice (of which there seems no reason to doubt), how easily could pins, straw, bones of fowls, &c., have been transmitted through the perforation to the bed on which she lay.

It is not a little remarkable that the first two persons she accused of tormenting her, were Katherine Campbell, one of the family domestics, and Agnes Naismith, an old widow, with both of whom she had differed a few days previous to her being seized with fits. The first she had detected taking, or stealing a drink of milk, and reported the circumstance to her mother. A scolding of course would ensue, and Campbell being of a proud temper,

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\* It is pretty generally known that Witch cantrips were only observable through a knot hole; to have attempted to discover what they were about through an artificial aperture, would have been ineffectual.

heaped, as might have been expected, some coarse imprecations on the head of the tell-tale. Naismith had put some trifling questions to the girl on the following day, to which, it would appear, she had received pert answers. If we may trust the narrative, both of the women had been of loose speech, and an expression is put into the mouth of Campbell of the rudest description. But if evil were to follow all the imprecations of a similar nature, which, it is to be lamented, we hear almost daily on our streets, what an unhappy world would we live in? A few days after the interviews alluded to, Christian Shaw fell ill, and about a month after, she told those about her, that Campbell and Naismith were present, cutting her side and otherwise tormenting her.

At that time the belief in Witchcraft was so general, that when persons were attacked by uncommon diseases, they were ready to impute their sufferings to Witchcraft, and in the case we are attempting to elucidate, if the fits with which Christian Shaw was afflicted were not feigned, we can hardly be surprised that she ascribed her sufferings to the women she had so lately quarrelled with. At that period there was scarcely a corner in Scotland that had not its suspected persons, and it appears that Naismith was one of these. The diseased imagination of the girl would easily conjure up the figures of the persons she dreaded, and she might actually believe in her own mind that the figures so presented, were the real bodies of those she denounced. We say she *might* have believed what she asserted, if we were certain that her sufferings were real, and did not proceed from premeditated malice. When a person tells one lie he is often obliged to invent a few more to cover the first; so in a case of Witchcraft, the accuser has only to draw upon his or her fancy to make his or her story believed.

The Bargarran case had excited a considerable degree of interest over the west of Scotland; it had even reached the ears of the Court, and a commission of inquiry was appointed to sift the affair to the bottom. The principal



actor in the diabolical affair, and her accomplices would be aware of the game they had to play, and would exert themselves to the utmost to add more mystery to the already inexplicable drama. The apparitions became more frequent, and her fits and vomitings occurred at shorter intervals. Other men and women were added to the first invisible actors, and the tragedy was wound up amid imprisonments, tortures, and cruel deaths. On referring to the preceding narrative, Christian Shaw will be found pouring out a string of advices to Katherine Campbell, although the latter was not visible to any individual present. It is not a little remarkable, that a girl of such tender years could utter such a speech, and quote scripture so fluently to support her assertions, as she is said to have done. It would baffle the greater part of women of mature years in our day to match her.

But the most remarkable, and what we regard as the most witchlike part of the story, remains to be told. It appears that no regular reporter was present to note the words of Christian Shaw; they were related verbally afterwards, and yet the narrative would lead us to believe, that the words recorded convey not only the meaning, but are in the exact order in which they fell from the lips of the speaker. If our newspaper reporters were as clever now-a-days, what a saving of expense would it be to their employers, in paper, pencils, &c.

In one of his poems, Burns assures us that the *Deil* is in Dublin city; to the honour of Glasgow, however, neither he nor his agents durst show their faces in that city in the days of Christian Shaw. During the time of her illness she was twice sent to Glasgow, and while there, was freed from the persecutions of the witches. The reason must be obvious to every attentive reader; the oblique hole could not be so easily transferred to Glasgow, as the body of Christian Shaw, and therefore the humbug of pins, straw, hair, and bones of fowls, must have been given up. A few days after her second return from Glasgow, the witches commenced their tormentings with increased ma-

lignity. The Devil himself was brought upon the stage in his own shape, and actually threatened to swallow the miserable girl. Credulity had surely attained its highest pitch, when such a story could for a moment be believed. Possibly the most ludicrous piece of imposition which she exhibited during her ravings, was the tearing the piece of red cloth from the *duddie* jacket of one of the witches, the initials of whose name were J. P. Why the name is not given we are at a loss to determine; but it seems to us a little strange, that she who was so ready to denounce others, was so careful in concealing this J. P. Her mother and her aunt, we are told, heard distinctly the sound of the tearing of the cloth, and when they examined her hands, they found a piece of red cloth in each of them. Now if we believe that the bye-standers heard the rending of the cloth, and after examination had found only one piece, it would be rather a puzzling case; but when two pieces were found, the difficulty is at once solved. There is not the least doubt that she had a piece of red cloth concealed about her person, which she tore into two. If the whole jacket was invisible to the bye-standers, why were the fragments so easily discernible?

A short time after the affair of the cloth, Agnes Naismith was confronted a second time with the hero of our story, and on that occasion breathed a prayer over her, which could only proceed from the heart and lips of a good woman. She said, "May the Lord God of heaven and earth, send the girl her health, and try out the verity." Now, Christian Shaw had repeatedly asserted that Naismith was a witch, and one of her principal tormentors, and yet the narrative would have us to believe that a witch could utter such a wish. It is true, we are told, that she did not appear any more against her as a persecutor, but then she was seen by the damsel, in her invisible form, among the witches, and defending her from the fury of the rest. How, in the name of common policy, could the Devil put up with such a servant?

Katherine Campbell acted in a different manner from

Agnes Naismith; her character had been bruited about the country as a witch, and we may reasonably suppose, that she would on that account lose her situation as a servant. Like Naismith, she had been solicited to pray for Christian Shaw, but her proud spirit disdained to comply with the request of those who had been the means of blighting her ambitious prospects for ever. Instead of prayers, she heaped imprecations, not only on the head of the foolish girl, but on the heads of all those who were *in any way concerned with her*; and for what? *for what they had done to her*. If Campbell had been a witch, that was proof positive that she was not a hypocrite. If she had been a witch, could she not have veiled her crime under the specious language of Naismith? Doubtless she could, but her independent spirit could not brook the idea of praying for a girl who had been the chief instrument in heaping shame and danger on her head. An acute sense of the wrong she had sustained, prompted her to spurn with indignation the proposals of her persecutors.

We next find Christian Shaw tearing down the hangings of her bed, pulling off her head-cloths, and neck-cloths, and singing and dancing as merrily with the witches as if she really had belonged to the party. We will enlarge more fully on this part of her narrative when we come to treat of spectral illusions, and the various phenomena that arise in the mind when under the influence of certain diseases.

After the exhibitions we have adverted to had continued about five months, the witches appear to have changed their tactics. Instead of fits and pains in her side, she was seized with an unaccountable desire of running up stairs and down stairs, to the terror and amazement of all who beheld her. Clergymen from various parts of the country were now regular in their attendance at Bargarran house, praying with, and instituting fasts for the recovery of the girl. One of these, a Mr. Alexander King, minister of Bonhill, happened to be in the house when she was suddenly carried down a stair which led to the cellar. It

chanced that her brother and sister had gone there a little time before her with a lighted candle. She soon extinguished the light, but they had courage enough to hold her fast till the minister came, who kept her in his arms till another light was brought. After the affair was over, Mr. King declared, that when he was carrying her up stairs, he felt something drawing her downwards, but yet he was enabled to keep his hold. Here we have something like *physical force* between the *evil ones* and the inmates of Bargarran house, ending in the defeat of the invisible party. There is not the least doubt but that the girl knew where her brother and sister were, and consequently, would consider that by following them down stairs, and putting out the light, she would have it in her power to tell whatever story she pleased. The minister, being a believer in Witchcraft, would naturally feel alarmed, and his fears acting upon his nerves, would make him believe that the girl's weight was greater than he had anticipated, and of course, would impute it to supernatural interposition. At this time, too, she told those about her, when she would be seized with a fit: how easily could she make herself a true prophet?

The witches, finding themselves foiled in their endeavours to seduce the girl to their interests, fell to work in a way which, according to the narrative, would have proved successful, but for the exertions of her friends. It seems, that, like other children, she had been fond of sweetmeats, and accordingly the witches made their approaches by promising her an apron full of them, on condition that she would go to certain remote places about the house, which they pointed out, and bring a snood or cravat, along with her. What girl of eleven years of age would refuse joining a gang of witches for a lapful of sweetmeats! What was to be done with the snood we are not told, but the girl was determined to comply with the request of the witches, and when kept from them by force, uttered hideous cries, and was cross and peevish for some time afterwards to every person about her. What miser-

able shifts had her tormentors been reduced to? What an imbecile set of wretches must they have been!

On the 15th January, 1697, a very silly story is introduced into the narrative about a beggar girl, who, it seems, had a "scabbed face." Christian Shaw had doubtless seen the girl in the morning, or received an account of her from some of her accomplices; for in the afternoon of the day on which she had been asking alms, she told her mother that such a girl had, on the preceding day, been among her tormentors, and had told her she would be in Bargarran house on the following morning. Where was her proof for all this?—her own assertion! The "scabbed faced" girl had surely been among the most infatuated of her race, or she would have taken care to have avoided Bargarran house, if she had not had a desire to be apprehended as a witch.

On the 21st of January, the witches laid aside their natural shapes, and appeared in the forms of cats, ravens, owls, and horses. How such a group could find room in a small bed, it is not easy to imagine, but, listen ye incredulous! her mother and another gentlewoman, when removing her from the bed, saw something moving under the bed-cloaths as big as a cat! This is surely enough, in all conscience, to set the matter at rest: but what had become of the horses? The ravens and owls, to be sure, might fly away.

On the same morning she overheard J. P., the Andersons, and others, whispering among themselves, that the Devil had promised to carry her through the hall window, and that they were to drown her in the well, and it would be thought that she had destroyed herself. Could the witches find no other place to consult together than Christian Shaw's bed-room? It is carrying the joke too far, to believe for a moment that they would not be more cautious in their proceedings. Besides, are we not told, that a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without the consent of its Maker? And yet, in the narrative it is gravely asserted, that he who well knew the power of that being,

attempted to do what he must have known was beyond his power. What absurdities may not the human mind be taught to receive for truth!

Another ridiculous part of the story is the account of the furious blows she is said to have received from the witches, and which we are told the by-standers distinctly heard, though they did not see the hands that inflicted the blows. We are not informed that any marks followed these blows, and are therefore led to believe that the oblique hole in the partition would be in requisition during the time the blows were inflicted.

We are told that when she was sitting one night with her parents, she cried out that something was cutting her thigh. Her mother instantly put her hand *into her pocket*, where she found an unfolded knife, and which, we are given to understand, was folded when it was put into her pocket. How it entered into her mother's head to put her hand so suddenly into the girl's pocket we are at a loss to conceive, but we would have imagined that it would have been the last place that would have been searched. It is not said that there was any appearance of wounds upon her person, and yet she asserted that the mysterious J. P. was *cutting* her thigh. The knife being folded up, was restored to her pocket, and the same trick was again exhibited to the wondering spectators, and still, so far as we are informed, with the same consequences; namely, wounds were not inflicted. If the witches had an intention to destroy the girl, what were they about when they had the power of her knife, and had the advantage of being invisible to every person but herself? On testimony such as we are examining, were seven human beings consigned to the stake!

Again we find the witches changing their tactics; when the girl attempted to eat or drink, they set her teeth so firmly together, that she could not introduce food into her mouth, and when they did give her permission to eat or drink, it was only for the purpose of choking her. By this time they had got such an ascendancy over her mind,



that she began to delight in all kinds of mischief, such as the breaking of dishes; and when any person received a bodily injury, she would laugh and rejoice exceedingly. Now all these things could be done by any person who willed it, without the assistance of any supernatural being whatever, and yet these trifles were adduced as evidence against a number of individuals, her neighbours, whom she had charged with being leagued with the Devil for the purpose of destroying her.

On the 1st of February, she attempted to reveal some things which her tormentors had ordered her to conceal, and was severely handled by them for her pains. It appears, however, that she was getting tired of exhibiting fits on these and similar occasions, for she told her by-standers, that it was by means of a charm that such restraints were laid upon her, and that it might be discovered by searching for it beneath her bed. She, however, took good care that no person should search for it but herself, for she quickly flew beneath the bed and brought out what seemed an entire egg shell, and threw it instantly into the fire, when it melted away, "after the manner of wax." Why such haste in destroying this precious proof? and why was it not subjected to the examination of some competent persons? These questions may be easily answered; the trick would have been discovered. The most simple reader will naturally wonder how the witches displayed such a total want of prudence, as to let Christian Shaw know any thing whatever of the charm. She, however, gets over the difficulty, by telling her questioners, that a voice speaking distinctly over her head, told her these and other things of the like nature. It is a pity for her credit that no other person heard the voice.

On the following day, she was greatly alarmed at the appearance of John Lindsay of Barloch, talking with her father in Bargarran hall. She told her mother that she had hitherto concealed his name, on account of the threats he had uttered, if she dared to denounce him. Why, then, did she dare to do it when he was in the house?

Where was her dread of his vengeance at that time? At the instigation of some of her friends, she approached the unsuspecting Lindsay, and touched his person, upon which she was immediately seized with extreme tortures in all parts of her body. Barloch, upon this, was strictly interrogated, and, as might have been expected, could not give satisfactory answers to the questions proposed to him. Let any person put himself in his place, and he will readily conceive how impossible it must have been to have satisfied a prejudiced party, especially when he could have no means of proving his innocence but his own word, and yet it was only the girl's word, without farther proof, that attached guilt to his name. Surely the people of those days had forgotten the injunction, "At the mouth of two or more witnesses," &c.

On the same night, an old Highland fellow, as the narrative calls him, came to Bargarran house, and gave himself out as a weary traveller, and implored a night's lodging. This the servants refused, but gave him something by way of alms. Christian Shaw, some how or other, learned the circumstance, and her malicious disposition prompted her to tell her mother, that one of the wicked crew was in the house. Now, it was possible for her to have seen the man from the window, or have heard him talking with the servants in the kitchen. That, however, was overlooked, and the trial by touch was had recourse to. As might have been expected, the girl, to substantiate her assertion, instantly complained of grievous tortures, in consequence of the touch. The Highlandman, of course, was arrested.

The next morning the minister came to Bargarran house, and the story being told to him, the Highlandman was subjected to a severe examination. Nor did the affair stop here: the girl asked him if he would allow her the liberty to name the persons who haunted and molested her, upon which he looked on her with an angry countenance, and having so done, her mouth was instantly shut, and her teeth firmly set together. Now, if the man

had been guilty, he would have taken care not to look angry, nor is it likely that he would have exhibited his supernatural powers before such an audience. But being innocent, he would not only *look* angry, but he had a good right to *feel* angry. With regard to the shutting of the mouth, and the setting of the teeth, Christian Shaw could easily accomplish that part of the business.

The case having been reported to his Majesty's most honourable privy council, they *piously* granted a commission to inquire into the matter, and on the 4th of February they apprehended a man of the name of Alexander Anderson, an ignorant, irreligious fellow, and his daughter Elizabeth, both of whom they committed to prison. We are told that the girl had made some sort of confession before the kirk-session, about seeing the Devil in the likeness of a small black man, in company with her grandmother, who, it seems, had been a foolish woman, greatly addicted to profane swearing, as well as heaping imprecations on the heads of those who offended her. Some of her imprecations had been followed with fatal events, but if any person is in the habit of uttering evil wishes on his or her neighbours, there is every probability that some of the imprecated may fall into misfortune. Death is a thing of common occurrence, and we may easily conceive that some of those whom Jean Fulton, (the girl's grandmother,) cursed, might have died without the smallest blame being attributable to her: many have died whom she never cursed. After Elizabeth Anderson had been committed to jail, she obstinately denied every thing that we are told she had confessed to the kirk-session, until she had been *dealt with* by some gentlemen who had been appointed to examine her. We may almost imagine what the words *dealt with* mean. It is well known that persons accused of Witchcraft were subjected to various kinds of torture, for the purpose of bringing them to a confession of their guilt. These torturings were of such a description, that it is not to be wondered at, although the tortured individuals confessed to any thing which their inquisitors were pleased

to charge them with. Life is dear to every one, but death is certainly preferable to a life of disgrace, imprisonment, and severe bodily suffering. Our readers will possibly excuse us, if we take the liberty to describe one of the instruments of torture which was applied exclusively to witches: we mean a witch gag, or bridle. Imagine a bar of iron about four inches long, and half an inch in diameter, from the centre of which, and at right angles to it, projected another piece of sharp pointed iron about two inches long. Cords were attached to the extremities of the longer piece, and it was then inserted into the mouth of the unhappy being who had been imprisoned for Witchcraft. It was then turned round till the pointed piece came in contact with the roof of the mouth, and then fastened. It was then impossible for the persons so bridled to shut their mouths, and in this position they were locked up for the night. The reason assigned for that cruelty was, that the witch should not have it in her power to hold any conversation with the Devil. It is hardly possible to conceive any instrument of torture more horrifying than such a thing must have been. What an awful situation for human beings to sit during a long night in a dark and dreary cell, with their mouths at the full stretch, and propped with a sharp iron instrument, ready to run into their flesh, if they dared to relax their jaws in the smallest degree! Confess themselves witches! Who would not confess any thing, if it would be the means of putting a termination to such dreadful sufferings? Several of these instruments of torture are still to be seen in various places of Scotland, but, thanks to the spirit of the age we live in, they are only exhibited as the relics of a rude and barbarous age.

On the 5th of February, five of the unhappy individuals who had been accused by Christian Shaw, were confronted with her in the presence of the Lord Blantyre, and the commissioners who were appointed to inquire into the case. Several other gentlemen and ministers were also present. The trial by touch was the first thing adopted

by these sagacious gentlemen, and the same effects as have been already noticed, were exhibited before their wondering eyes. It was remarked by the by-standers, that, when touched by Catherine Campbell, she was more grievously tormented than when any of the rest put their hands on her. That circumstance, the narrative admits, damped and confounded Campbell herself. Now, if she had been the guilty person the writer would have us to believe, she would neither have been damped nor confounded; she would have known from experience, what would have been the effect of a witch touching one that was bewitched. We are not told that their touch injured any other person. Campbell, who had formerly refused to bless the girl who had been the means of defaming her, on seeing her apparent sufferings, uttered the following exclamation over her; "The Lord God of heaven and earth bless thee, and save thee both soul and body." Was that the prayer of a witch? These are words which must have sprung from the heart and soul of the speaker. It is not a little curious to observe what effects the prayers of a witch could produce. The clergymen had failed in their endeavours to remove her *disorder*, either by prayers or fastings, but we learn from the narrative, that whenever a witch addressed a short prayer to him from whom proceed health and sickness, the desire was instantly granted. Four days before this affair, Christian Shaw told, on destroying the egg-shell that burned like wax, that she would not be so severely handled when she told any thing the witches had forbidden her to tell, for a voice speaking above her head had told her so; the voice had deceived her, as we have already seen, in several instances: liars should have good memories.

About this time, a boy named Thomas Lindsay, was seized upon upon flagrant presumptions of Witchcraft; he had been foolish enough to claim the Devil for his father, and boasted that he could fly in the likeness of a crow, upon the mast of a ship. It is not related that he ever exhibited the feat, but it seems he would for a halfpenny make a horse stand still while in the plough, at the word of com-

mand, by turning himself round widder-shins, or contrary to the course of the sun. Even in our own day, many boys can, by pronouncing certain words, make a horse stand still, yet we never hear of one of them being laid up for Witchcraft. Lindsay, however, was arrested, but he obstinately denied every thing laid to his charge. His interrogators, however, ultimately triumphed over him, and there cannot be a doubt, that threats, or tortures, would be the means by which they would effect their purpose. It is not likely that the child Lindsay would resist the pressing entreaties of a witch bridle.

He confessed having been in company with the Devil, and acknowledged that all those whom Christian Shaw had delated, were in the habit of associating with his Satanic Majesty. What fools must the witches have been, to admit a mischievous boy under twelve years of age into their secrets!

Emboldened by her success, Christian Shaw began to overstep the bounds of common prudence, and ventured on the dangerous ground of prophecy. A public fast had been appointed by the presbytery, on the girl's account, and Mr. Turner, the minister of the parish, along with Mr. James Hutcheson, minister of Kilellan, were appointed to preach on the occasion. On the morning of the fast day, Christian Shaw told her mother that she had heard the Devil on the previous evening speaking of the fast, and also mentioning what ministers were to be there, and moreover, that Mr. James Hutcheson would stumble, as he went up to the pulpit, and that his peruke would fall off, and that all the people would laugh at him. It seems, however, that there was worse in store for him than that; he was to fall and break his neck as he went home. Neither of these things, however, occurred, but she covered her false prophesyings by throwing the blame on the Devil, whom she stigmatised as a liar. This was giving him one of his old names, for we have been taught that he is a liar from the beginning. There is not a doubt that she would have been well pleased if things had fallen out as she had prognosticat-



ed, as such occurrences would have gone far to establish her integrity.

The day after the fast, the celebrated Margaret Lang, and her daughter, Martha Semple, who had been accused by the three confessants as belonging to their party, came of their own accord to Bargarran house. Now, the persons who accused them had been people of the very worst description, and Margaret Lang, according to tradition, had not only been superior to her neighbours in point of mental acquirements, but had been a woman of a religious turn of mind. Her vocation, that of a midwife, must have made her well acquainted with most of the families in the parish, and the respect generally shown to women in her line of life, would make her careful of the company she kept. But what will not malice lend itself to, when the character of the innocent is to be attacked? Christian Shaw had never accused Margaret Lang nor her daughter during the six months that she had been accusing others; we must conclude, therefore, that it was at the suggestion of the confessants that she charged them with being among her tormentors. Conscious of her innocence, Margaret Lang, without delay, went straight to Bargarran house, taking her daughter along with her. Ashamed of her conduct, Christian Shaw declared, on hearing of their arrival, that her tongue was bound up, and that she could not accuse Margaret Lang to her face. When could guilt look innocence in the face? Determined to clear her character, Margaret Lang went fearlessly into the chamber where the girl was, and in the presence of some ministers told her to come near her, for she would do her no harm. She afterwards put her arms round her, and spoke soothing words, for the purpose of composing her mind, and asked her pointedly, if she had ever seen her among her tormentors, to which the girl answered, No, but at the same time said she had seen her daughter. After Margaret Lang and her daughter had withdrawn to the hall, the minister questioned the girl why she had accused the woman, and on being confronted with her, had denied her former words;

to this she replied, that they were to take her contrary ; of course, Martha Semple, Margaret Lang's daughter, must have been innocent, according to her own showing. A short time after, on being *urged*, she said she could now accuse Margaret Lang to her face. Margaret, who had been sitting near the hall door when the girl passed to her chamber, said to her, "The Lord bless thee, and ding (that is, drive) the devil out of thee;" thereby showing, that she was convinced that the girl's ravings proceeded from a diseased imagination, or rather, according to the belief of the times, that the Devil had got possession of her. A few minutes afterwards Margaret Lang left the hall, and the girl, no longer afraid to speak, said that the reason she durst not accuse Margaret to her face, was on account of a charm, in the form of a parcel of hair, which she (M. L.) had let fall at the hall door as she came in. Like the egg-shell which burned "after the manner of wax," the hair was instantly cast into the fire, by which means it was impossible to compare it with any other hair in the house ; there is every probability that it grew on the girl's own head, and as she was walking about the house at the time it was easy for her to drop it in any place she pleased. When the question was put to her, how she came to the knowledge of the charm, her old friend was at hand to extricate her from the seeming difficulty, namely, the voice speaking above her head had suggested the circumstance to her : a very convenient voice truly ; why it did not communicate the secret to the rest of the audience, we are at a loss to understand.

On the same night that the above occurrence took place, the Devil made one of the strongest efforts he had yet made to gain the girl to his interest. He even went so far as to present her with a paper whereon to sign herself over to him, for which act she was to be abundantly supplied with sweetmeats, sack, (what! a girl of eleven years of age to be tempted with Sir John Falstaff's favourite beverage!) a bonny coat with silver lace, &c. We wonder how she could resist such inducements, especially when they were

presented by a gentleman in the figure of a *sow*! Brave men in marriage too!—to resist such an offer *at her age*, must fill every girl who has not entered her *teens* with perfect astonishment.

On the following day, a woman of the name of Margaret Rodger, came to the house, inquiring after the lady. It seems Christian Shaw had on the previous evening told her mother that one of her tormentors would be in Bargarran house on the following day. Margaret Roger was, of course, confronted with the girl, who insisted that she (M. R.) would take her home with her, as her father and mother had left her; a proof, certainly, that she was in a state of mental derangement at the time. The three confessants, who, it seems, had been confined in Bargarran house, were brought up to the chamber, upon which the girl was so overjoyed that she ran up to them in a laughing manner, and entered with alacrity into conversation with the party. It is needless to add, that Margaret Rodger was accused by the confessants, as having been at meetings with the Devil in Bargarran orchard, plotting with the witches the ruin of Christian Shaw. There cannot be a doubt that they had their clue before they were brought into the chamber.

The Devil, having been unsuccessful in his attempts on the girl in the shape of a sow, made his next appearance in the shape of a man, and had for an assistant one M. M. in the shape of a *bumbee*. Our heroine, however, resisted the entreaties of both, upon which the *bumbee* pinched her leg so hard, that she was obliged to cry out, and when her leg was examined, lively marks of *nails* were distinctly visible on them. Bees in our day have stings, and how our naturalists have neglected to give us an account of the extinct species that had *nails*. we are at a loss to conceive. The story appears to be simply this: Christian Shaw had accused some of her neighbours with dealing in Witchcraft, and to substantiate her assertions she pinched her own leg.

On the 14th of March, it being the sabbath day, she was seized with fits, and said that if J. K., a woman who

lived in the neighbourhood, was not sent for, she would continue to get worse. The woman was accordingly sent for, and was told that if the girl was again tormented by her, she would be apprehended as others had been; upon which, the terrified woman prayed that God might send the girl her health, and, wonderful to relate, the girl instantly recovered.

On the 20th of the same month, we have another instance of the wonderful efficacy of the witch's prayers. She being in one of her fits, James Lindsay, one of the confessants, was brought into the room where she was, and she had no sooner seen him, than she ran to him smiling, and eagerly inquired where he had been so long, and earnestly asked after his health. Now we are told that there were several persons in the room along with her, not one of whom she could or would see, and yet James Lindsay was not only seen by her, but a snuff-box that had been put into his hands, and which was invisible to her when in the hands of her friends, was clearly discernible when in his possession. During this exhibition, the sheriff and her father thought fit to send for the M. M. who has been already mentioned, and try her as they had tried James Lindsay. The experiment succeeded to their wishes; Christian Shaw received her with smiles (it appears she reserved her smiles for the witches,) and when the woman asked her when she had seen her among her tormentors, she answered that she had seen her the other night, and further charged her with restraining her from making use of a certain Highland woman's name. The woman, as well she might, felt astonished at the accusation, and suddenly exclaimed, "Lord help the poor daft child, and rebuke the Devil," upon which the girl fell down, but almost instantly recovered her wonted health and strength. Common sense should have taught the people of Bargarran to retain the witches about the house for the benefit of their prayers.

Two days after M. M.'s prayer had had such wonderful effects, T. M. or J. G. visited the girl, and questioned

her if ever she had seen her among her tormentors, and maintained, in the pride of innocence, that she could not, as she (C. S.) was now looking on her, and did not fall into fits as she used to do, when looking on those she had formerly accused. The damsel was rather taken aback by this question, and remained some time silent; she had forgot her lesson. The woman, however, insisted on an answer, and Christian Shaw had the temerity to say, Yes; to which the simple woman replied, "Perhaps you have seen the Devil in my shape." In the days of which we are writing, and in preceding ages, it was generally believed that the Devil could assume any shape he pleased, and accordingly Christian Shaw asserted that he appeared to her in different shapes of a sow, a man, a gentleman with gold and silver lace on his clothes, and of a naked man with a shirt, having hair on his hands and face like swines' bristles, &c. Now, if he could represent a sow, could he not with equal ease represent the appearance of Margaret Lang, or any other of the individuals that appeared to the diseased imagination of Christian Shaw. The thing is so obvious, that the mere plea of ignorance cannot excuse the conduct of the judges of the land, who stretched their power to such an unwarrantable extent, as to murder indiscriminately, and in the most cruel manner, all those who were accused by ignorant or malicious persons, as being guilty of a crime which was beyond the reach of proof. If Christian Shaw asserted that those she accused were present in her visions, does not the bible tell us, that the Devil can assume different shapes, and if they had been acquainted with its contents, they surely would have leaned to the side of mercy, as being the most likely to be true.

We have taken a cursory glance at some of the principal events which took place in Bargarran house, prior to the burning of the seven individuals for the bewitching of Christian Shaw. We have shown that art and malice on the one hand, and ignorance and credulity on the other, were the chief causes which led to so melancholy a catastrophe.

If a belief in Witchcraft has not wholly passed from our land, it is confined to the more ignorant of the community, and is fated, at no distant day, to wither before the light which emanates from the searching eyes of Reason and of Science.

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## SECTION II.

### THE PHILOSOPHY OF WITCHCRAFT CONSIDERED.

THAT Witchcraft ever existed, no man of sound judgment will affirm. That thousands of lives have been sacrificed to the credence given to its reality, none will deny. In the latter part of the sixteenth, during the whole of the seventeenth, and including a considerable portion of the eighteenth centuries, did this absurd and unreasonable dogma prevail, to an extent at once inconsistent with the superintendence of a watchful Providence, and unworthy of the notions entertained of the wisdom, power, and goodness of the Almighty.

Some may be disposed to argue, that Witchcraft is a subject unworthy of discussion; and the attempt to prove the absurdity of a belief in its existence, a libel on the intelligence of modern times. This belief, however, prevails to a greater extent, and the conviction of its truth enters more minutely into the every day circumstances in which life is spent, than we are at first view led to expect. Lucky and unlucky days are still observed, and the altar of Hymen robbed of its votaries during the lovely month of May. Travellers are to be seen anxious to have the first word with those they meet, and the cautious housewife is still found turning the burning ember in the grate, on the entrance of a stranger, and throwing an old shoe after her husband when he goes to market with the produce of his labour.



Had the belief in the influence of Witchcraft been confined to secular affairs, it would long since have been treated by every reasonable person with derision, or consigned, like the fairies, to the tales of the nursery, or the embellishment of fiction. The doctrine of Witchcraft, with its concomitant absurdities, has a deeper root in our affections. It is engrafted into our religion, and by a mistaken interpretation, is literally received as part of the Christian revelation. Reason, in this case, seems at variance with holy writ, and must either succumb in silence to the pernicious consequences of this belief, or become strongly prejudiced against the sacred volume, and conceive its doctrines to be nothing but a system of irrational tenets and superstitious fooleries.

The discussion, then, of a question which involves within itself others of so much importance to our happiness and well-being, cannot be said to be of minor importance, or unworthy of a philosophical investigation. The philosophy of Witchcraft has its foundation in the laws of nature; these laws are the Creator's laws, and his laws are truth. There cannot be a more illiberal or hurtful prejudice than that which endeavours to make a distinction between the truths expressed in Nature's works, and those written in the Book of Life. If the source of all truth be one, and the truths of science and revelation proceed from the same source, then no one truth can lose its value, or be destructive of another truth. It is the great First Cause that speaks from nature in all her departments, whether in the wide field of creation, or in the sublime breathings of inspiration. Impressed with a conviction of the truth of these assertions, it may be necessary, previous to discussing the question, to consider the principal cases recorded in sacred history, which seem to intimate the existence of Witchcraft, comparing them with the notorious cases of modern times, and estimating the characters of the individuals concerned with those who figured in the days of King James. For this purpose it is necessary to understand that in modern times witches were endowed with powers to which those

recorded in Scripture did not pretend. The design of the following observations is to prove that Scripture affords not the slightest reason to conclude that the crime of Witchcraft, as the word is usually understood, ever existed. The belief of such a crime, derives no support from Scripture, otherwise than by a misapprehension of the meaning of the text.

The belief that certain persons were endowed with supernatural power, and that they were assisted by invisible spirits, is of very ancient date, but the definition of Witchcraft in those days differs much from those of modern times. Witchcraft, in the middle ages, according to Sir Walter Scott, was understood to be a compact with Satan, who combined his various powers of doing harm with the power of the witch or wizard, for the purpose of inflicting calamities upon the person and property, the fortune and the fame of innocent human beings; imposing the most horrible diseases, and death itself, as marks of their slightest ill-will; transforming their own persons, and those of others, at their pleasure; raising tempests to ravage the crops of their enemies, or carrying them home to their own garners; annihilating or transferring to their own dairies the produce of herds; spreading pestilence among cattle, infecting and blighting children, and in a word, doing more evil than the heart of man might be supposed capable of conceiving, by means far beyond mere human power to accomplish.

That individuals possessing such powers ever existed, cannot for a moment be admitted, without the acknowledgment of a seeming imperfection in the established laws of nature; but the laws of nature know no change, because they are the work of Him who is unchangeable. Every step we advance in the fields of science, and every discovery that breaks in upon our understandings, exhibit truths, the most irresistible, that nature is governed by invariable and unbending laws, and show that these laws have been the result of infinite wisdom and power.

The laws of nature never were, and never will be suspended, at the caprice of any created being. Science

proves the truth of this assertion, and intimates, in deep and daring characters, that Nature's plans are uniform, and that her laws are few. Were it possible for a moment to suspend the law of gravitation, for the purpose of enabling a witch to mount into the air, the operation of this suspended law would be felt and acknowledged by surrounding bodies, and every particle of dust asserting its right to move, confusion and destruction would follow. Nature governs not by individual, but by general laws. The same law that moulds a falling tear, maintains the earth in her orbit, and pencils the path of the moon. No part of the boundless universe, is left to the influence of undirected chance, neither is any part submitted to the freakish extravagance of a sportive power. The summer's soft breeze is the result of a positive and defined law, and the fury of the howling storm is restrained by the unbounded arm of sovereign power. The insect that dances its short-lived hour of existence in the rays of a summer's sun, and man, whose highly intellectual powers lead him to look forward to a perfection that is to assimilate him to a still higher order of being, are equally parts of a stupendous plan of order and benevolence—of one mighty whole, in which no isolated being lives, but each on each depending—the good of one the good of all. To suppose that mankind can injure each other, either in their persons or property, otherwise than by known and natural means, is to suppose an absurdity, and must be viewed as an acknowledgment of the imperfection of the natural laws. But it may be argued, that the witches and wizards of modern times, did not arrogate to themselves the powers ascribed to them; they were rather the instruments of satanic malignity, the wedded slaves of an unnatural and infernal league—their only reward, the gratification of spite, and ill-will, or the accomplishment of some beastly revel; for this they submitted to the bungling directions of their liege lord, the Devil, rendered themselves obnoxious to the suspicion of all around them, and liable to the severest penalties for disobe-

dience to their master, and at last consigned, soul and body, to his disposal.

Witchcraft, in this sense of the word, could not exist in ancient times; the heathen knew not of Satan. They had their deities whom they invoked, they had their gods whom they feared, and their idols whom they worshipped, but it was only for the purpose of prying into futurity that their magi or priests consulted them. In order to support the authority of the magi of the heathen, and more deeply to impress the minds of the ignorant with devotion to their interest, it was necessary for them to exhibit to their deluded votaries, proofs of supernatural power, and to support their system of falsehood and imposture by recourse to jugglery, and its kindred arts. It does not appear, however, that these magi had recourse to any other scheme to ensure the success of their divinations than the shrewdness arising from their actual knowledge of the circumstances, or events, or their art in communicating the response of the idol in language capable of conveying distinct or opposite meanings. Neither does it appear that the populace ever suspected their divining priesthood of being in league with infernal spirits, or joining in unholy revellings with midnight hags.

The idolatries of the magi was the religion of the State, and the appeals made to the gods, formed a part of the established worship. But in all this there was no diabolical subjection to infernal power, for the purpose of injuring the persons, or destroying the properties of innocent and unsuspecting individuals. The crime laid to their charge in the Jewish law, was the worshipping of gods made with men's hands. The Jews, under the severest penalties, were forbidden to make unto themselves any graven image, or to bow down to them, or to serve them; hence the severe edict of Moses, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.—A man also or a woman, that hath a familiar spirit, shall surely be put to death." The severity of this portion of the Levitical law seems to intimate a crime of the deepest dye, and requires, that the import

and meaning of the words used to convey the true nature of the crime be properly understood. Among the learned, the term *witch*, or *wizard*, has been, and still is, viewed in very different lights. Some affirm, that the meaning conveyed by these words includes, not only the silly fooleries and knavish trickery of the Egyptian Magi, but also a vicious and unholy alliance with the powers of darkness, for the purpose of assisting them in the execution of their evil designs. Others, with more propriety, contend that the word means nothing more than an allusion to the superstitions of the heathen, and an attempt to impose on the credulity of the ignorant by the use of unmeaning charms, and the deceptions of juggling artifice. The witches and wizards of the heathen knew of no such being as Satan. The Magi had doubtless their deities, to whose service they peculiarly devoted themselves, whose aid they invoked, and whose vengeance they feared; but the gods whom they worshipped, were alike incapable of doing either good or evil. The heathen could obtain no supernatural power from idols of silver or of gold; all pretence to such power was falsehood and imposture. The heathen were utterly incapable of committing the crime commonly understood by the term *witchcraft*. So far as refers to them, the term cannot be otherwise understood than as denoting a cheat or a juggler. Nor is the term *familiar spirit* less liable to misconstruction. By the common acceptation of this phrase, we are led to understand a close and intimate relation subsisting between the individual and an impure or evil spirit, which was always at the command of the individuals possessed, and ready to yield obedience to them, for the purpose of aiding and assisting them in the execution of their wicked designs. The only reward that seems to have been given to the impure spirit, was the permission to suck the individual who required its services. The teats through which the imps sucked, might be upon any part of the body, and generally consisted of a wart, or similar excrescence found upon the skin. These were considered to be indubitable marks of one possessed of a familiar spirit. In this

country, this was not only firmly believed in by the vulgar, but was supported by royal authority. King James embraced it in his Treatise on Demonology, and is said to have enjoyed with satisfaction, the result of his schemes for the detection of suspected persons. The method adopted for this discovery, was to place the individuals in the middle of a room, upon a stool or table, cross-legged, or in some uneasy posture, in which they were bound with cords, and forced to remain without sleep or food for twenty-four hours, during which time it was believed the familiar spirit would make its appearance in some assumed shape; a little hole having been also made in the door by which it was expected to enter, it was necessary for them to be continually sweeping the room, and if a spider or a fly made its appearance, immediately to kill it. If by any means an insect made its escape from the individual who attempted to destroy it, it was then concluded to have been the imp, or familiar spirit, that had escaped in that assumed shape. So generally was this belief adopted among the people in the middle ages, that only one writer was found hardy enough to oppose it. This was Reginald Scot, one of the most amusing and instructive writers of his time. The pedantic King James beheld in the more philosophical researches of Scot a refutation of his own absurd dogmas, and in his royal wrath ordered the book to be burned by the common executioner. To the phrase *familiar spirit*, as well as to the terms *witch* and *wizard*, commentators have assigned different meanings, but the most plausible meaning seems to be that which confines the phrase *familiar spirit* to the powers of ventriloquism possessed by the pytho, the diviner, or the conjuror, by means of which they were enabled so to modify the voice as to make it appear to proceed from the belly, from a distance, or from beneath the ground. By means of this art did they impose upon the credulity of the ignorant, and alarm the fears of the superstitious to a most extraordinary extent. Those who practised divination, had this power of modulating their voice, so as to deceive the hearers, who supposed the demon or familiar spirit



to give the response to the inquiries which they made through the medium of the individual said to be possessed. That the Jews under the Levitical law practised these deceptions, is evident from the severe penalties inflicted on those who pretended by these means to reveal secrets, or foretel future events; nor is it difficult to discover why Moses made that a capital crime which we are now disposed to laugh into derision. The lawgivers of Israel were the priesthood, who were deeply imbued with a sense of the existence of "One only and true God," and zealous to extirpate the remains of idolatry which the Jews derived from their long sojourn among the Egyptians, and which was increased by their close relation to the heathen nations which they conquered. The Jews were a "stiff-necked and rebellious people," and idolatry, we find, was their most besetting sin. But notwithstanding the severity of the Mosaic law, there were still individuals found, who consulted the oracles of the heathen, making light of the response of the prophets of the true God, swerving from the worship of Jehovah, and giving that honour to stocks and stones which was due to Him alone. In order to preserve the knowledge of the true Deity, and to check and prevent the numerous acts of rebellion from the true worship, the consulting of witches, or those having familiar spirits, was forbidden, and the individuals practising their arts were punished with death. From these remarks it will be seen, that the consequences, rather than the crime, were the occasion of the severity of the Jewish law, and that the witch, or sorcerer of antiquity, is not by any means the same character as that of latter times.

Notwithstanding the absurdity of the opinions which prevailed in the middle ages respecting Witchcraft, it is remarkable, that many intelligent individuals, from a mistaken notion of the true nature of the alleged crime, are yet convinced that Scripture gives countenance to the fact of persons, by positive compact with evil or familiar spirits, obtaining supernatural powers, and hereby opposing

and counteracting the universal and unbending laws established by the omnipotent Author of Nature. In support of this opinion, the feats of the woman at Endor have been uniformly held up as demonstrative evidence of its truth. To illustrate the case of the witch of Endor, it will be necessary to state the circumstance as related in 1 Samuel xxviii. In the preceding part of the narrative we are informed of the general defection of the subjects of Saul, and of the gathering together of the armies of the Philistines to fight with Israel; in the midst of these alarming difficulties, and impressed with a deep sense of his unworthy and ungrateful disobedience, "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled." But Samuel the prophet of the Lord, was dead, and "all Israel had lamented him," and Saul, in the extremity of his distress, had inquired of the Lord, but was answered not, "neither by *dreams*, nor by *Urim*, nor by *prophets*." He beheld with dismay the increasing defection of his people, and the daring inroads made upon his territories by the invading Philistines, filled his soul with alarm; neither was he without fears concerning David, with his chosen band of warriors, whom his jealousy had driven to seek an asylum in the land of his enemies. He had violated the laws of his God, and become obnoxious to the wrath of an offended Deity. Conscious of his unworthiness, he despaired of an answer from the true prophets, respecting the issue of his fearful forebodings, and commanded his servants to seek for him a "divining woman," and one that had a "familiar spirit," that he might inquire of her. On being informed of the woman at Endor, he resolved, at the hazard of his reputation, and in open defiance of the severe laws whose penalty he himself had often put in execution, to go to this divining woman, hoping she might, by her arts, give him that information respecting the issue of the approaching battle on which depended the safety of his kingdom. For this purpose he disguised himself, and with highly excited feelings, under the cloud of night, sought out the abode of the Pythoness. Tremblingly

alive to his own unworthy conduct, and suffering under the intensity of suspended hope, he said unto the woman, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the familiar spirit, and bring me *him* up whom I shall name unto thee," but the woman, beholding Saul supplicating before her, and knowing the extreme circumstances in which he was placed, artfully excused herself, saying, "*thou* knowest what Saul has done, how he hath cut off those that have familiarspirits, and the wizards out of the land: wherefore, then, layest thou a snare for my life to cause me to die?" but Saul, assuring her by an oath that no punishment should happen to her for this thing, she said unto him, 'Whom shall I bring up?' Saul said, 'Bring up Samuel.' The woman proceeds to call up the spirit of the departed prophet, which accordingly begins to appear. In this moment of suspense, when the mind of Saul was being wound up to its highest pitch, the woman, in order to keep alive the excitement, and perhaps to divert the attention of Saul from too close an inspection of the immediate object upon which the success of her scheme depended, cried with a loud voice, saying, "Why hast thou deceived me, for thou art Saul?" The king again assuring her of her safety, and inquiring at her what she had seen, she tells him she saw gods arising out of the earth; Saul becomes alarmed, and requires of her a more particular description of the apparition, which his fears prevented him from looking upon. She describes the figure as that of an old man covered with a mantle. In this figure the king acknowledges the resemblance of Samuel, and overcome with the intensity of his feelings he sinks on his face, and listens to the reproof of the apparition, and the melancholy prediction of his own defeat and death. The reply of Saul to the interrogation of the apparition, is truly descriptive of a mind suffering under the influence of the most intense excitement. The apparition is recorded to have said to Saul, "Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up? And Saul answered, I am sore distressed, for the Philistines make war against me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by prophets,

nor by dreams: therefore I have called thee, that thou mayest make known unto me what I shall do? Then said Samuel, Wherefore then dost thou ask of me, seeing the Lord is departed from thee, and is become thine enemy? and the Lord hath done to him as he spake by me: for the Lord hath rent the kingdom out of thine hand, and given it to thy neighbour, even David: because thou obeyedst not the voice of the Lord, nor executedst his fierce wrath upon Amalek, therefore hath the Lord done this thing unto thee this day. Moreover, the Lord will also deliver Israel with thee into the hand of the Philistines, and to-morrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hand of the Philistines." Then did the spirit of Saul sink beneath the prospect of his accumulated sufferings; "he fell straightway all along on the earth, and was sore afraid, because of the words of Samuel; and there was no strength in him."

In taking a review of this story, we do not consider it necessary to enter into any lengthened discussion of the true character and pretensions of the woman at Endor; as it must be evident to every person, that she was one of those worthless impostors, who, by pretended intercourse with demons and with the dead, deceived and defrauded the ignorant and credulous, who resorted to her oracle for the purpose of prying into futurity, or by her aid working evil on the persons or property of those with whom they were at variance. According to the opinions of the learned, the understood import of the word used to describe individuals of this kind, is restricted to those who by the use of charms and enchantments pretended to supernatural power, to the revealing of secret events, and to the gifts of prophecy. The using of charms, and the invoking of false gods, being considered an act of direct rebellion from the true God, and a treasonable defiance of the Levitical law, was consequently punished with death. Notwithstanding the severity of the Jewish law in this respect, this people were ever prone to resort to the practices of the heathen, and by auguries, by charms, and even poisonings, to pry

into the secrets of futurity, and to seek that intercourse with the state of the dead, which the Author of nature, doubtless for wise purposes, has appointed to remain for ever hid from our view. This disposition in the Jews to idol worship strengthened their belief in the prophetic powers of their divining women, and partly accounts for the act of Saul, after despairing of obtaining information, through the medium of the prophets, respecting his approaching fate.

As we have already remarked, the Pythoness or witch of the Hebrews, was believed to have the power of holding intercourse with the dead, through the medium of her familiar spirit. That any human being should have the power of raising the dead, or of entering into conversation with them, either personally, or by means of a familiar spirit, seems at once so absurd, as not to be for a moment admitted. If nothing short of a diseased state of mental feeling, could admit the palpable absurdity of departed spirits revisiting or interfering with the concerns of the life from whence they have been removed; how much more must decided symptoms of insanity be admitted to exist in the individual who can believe that the mummery of spells and enchantments may set aside the immutable laws of death and dissolution, and again encase the disembodied spirit in the likeness of corporeal form, when that form has long since yielded to the destroying and reproducing laws of nature.

It has been argued by some, that though the dead were not raised, yet they might have been personified by a demon to whom power was permitted by the Deity to give a response in strict accordance with the facts which were to follow; but this question may be set at rest by the following remarks of Sir Walter Scott, in his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*. "Whatever degree of power the false gods of heathendom, or devils in their name, might be permitted occasionally to exert, was, unquestionably, under the general restraint and limitation of Providence; and though, on the one hand, we cannot deny the

possibility of such permission being granted, in cases unknown to us, it is certain on the other, that the Scriptures mention no one specific instance of such influence, expressly recommended to our belief."

In the case of the king of Israel and the woman at Endor even this admission is not necessary. All pretension to supernatural power in the case recorded, besides being easily accounted for on the supposition of imposition, is also inadmissible as a revelation from the Deity, the final result having been already intimated to Saul by Samuel the prophet. In 1 Sam. xv. we are informed that the Lord commanded Saul, "to go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Saul, in obedience to this command, went down upon the Amalekites, and destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword; but Saul, contrary to the injunctions laid upon him, spared the king of the Amalekites, and preserved from destruction "the best of the sheep, and the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that were good, and would not utterly destroy them." For this act of disobedience he was severely reproofed by Samuel. Nor did the assertion of Saul, that he had brought up the "chief of the things as a sacrifice to the Lord," soften the reproof of the prophet; for he replied, "hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offering and sacrifice, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of Witchcraft, and stubbornness is as the iniquity of idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." And Samuel turned about to go away, but Saul laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle, and it rent, and Samuel said, "the Lord hath rent the kingdom from thee this day," &c., and Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death.

The command given by Samuel to the king to invade the country of the Amalekites, and utterly to destroy its in-



habitants, together with their flocks and herds, must have been fully known to all the people of Israel, and the gathering together of their soldiers, and other warlike preparations, must have been events highly exciting, and full of deep interest, to this conquering nation. Nor could the denouncement of Samuel on the disobedience of Saul, be of less importance, not only to the soldiery, who with him partook of the forbidden spoil of the Amalekites; but the prediction given by Samuel, the acknowledged prophet of the Most High, that the kingdom was to be taken from Saul and given to another, must have awakened deep interest in the minds of all the people. Following the example of the priesthood, the people became disaffected and disobedient to the king, and six hundred chosen warriors had, with David, already rebelled, and sought the protection of the Philistines. The Philistines had also invaded a considerable portion of the territories of the king, and the contending armies were gathered together on the eve of a great battle, which was expected to be decisive of the fate of the king and the fulfilment of the prediction of Samuel the prophet.

At this awful crisis, Saul saw with alarm the departing glory of his house, and beheld the last rays of his setting sun falling feebly upon the close of his existence. Impressed with a consciousness of his guilt, and of the just vengeance of an offended Deity, he looked forward to the approaching battle with the most fearful forebodings of the awful certainty of his defeat and death. In this state of intense mental excitement he sought the abode of the Pythoness, in the full belief that she, by the aid of her familiar spirit, could call Samuel from the dead, from whom he expected to learn the true issue of his impending fate.

Under such circumstances, it may be easily conceived how liable Saul was to be deceived. In a state of mind bordering upon derangement, and in the stillness of night, we find him in the dimly lighted cell of the impostor. Terror and darkness are favourable to the powers of

imagination, and give to its visionary phantoms a corporeal reality. Under these circumstances, we find Saul listening to an apparition echoing his own thoughts, and repeating in his startling ear the fatal predictions of Samuel, announced to him as he returned with the forbidden spoil of the slaughtered Amalekites. Deception and imposture on the part of the Pythoness, in this case, would be a matter of no great difficulty, and appear from the sequel to have been actually practised.

It does not appear that the woman remained in the presence of Saul, but rather that she retired into another apartment, and by the delusions of ventriloquism, and the aid of accomplices, conjured up the supposed appearance of Samuel, at this interesting moment, when the suspended reasoning powers of Saul were engrossed in the intensity of the highly excited feelings of wonder and hope—when the sound of the ventriloquist, as she gave expression to her unholy invocation, fell upon his ear as the voice of the sepulchred dead, and the response of her accomplices as the murmurs of the awakening tenants of the tomb. The woman, beholding the mind of Saul wound up to its highest possible pitch, and probably to give a more decided character to her imposture, pretended to make the discovery of Saul's disguise, and that he, in proper person, stood before her. She cried with a loud voice, and said unto him, why hast thou deceived me? upon this he again assured her of her safety, and eagerly inquired what she had seen. She replied that she saw gods ascending out of the earth. He then inquired of her the form and appearance of the being she told him of. She artfully evaded a direct reply to his question, and told him of the appearance of another person, whom she described as an old man covered with a mantle. This gave Saul a vivid impression of the departed appearance of Samuel, and brought forcibly to his recollection his own disobedience to the commands of the prophet, and the fatal prediction of the loss of his kingdom.

Mankind have ever deluded themselves with the belief

of prophetic powers, and accordingly individuals have never been awanting to arrogate to themselves this superiority. The most fearless and bold of this description look far beyond the gaze of vulgar eyes, and, pretending a direct communication with the Divinity, foretel events that seem quite unconnected with the ordinary occurrences of human life. If a coincidence follow, however remote it may be, it is received as a tacit acknowledgment of the fulfilment of the prediction, and the discrepancies, if any, are placed to the account of ignorance and incapacity to understand the full import of the prediction. But the witch of Endor appears only to have assumed the character of a prognosticator, and does not seem to have pryed further into the secrets of futurity, than, through the pretended apparition of Samuel, to intimate the near fulfilment of a prediction made by him, and to which Saul himself looked forward with the most fearful forebodings of its awful certainty. The only addition made to the prediction by the apparition, is, that on the morrow Saul with his three sons should be with him. If this is understood to mean the state of the dead, the event was one of the most probable description. The Philistines already flushed with the tide of victory, gave sure indication of the overthrow and defeat of the king; and such being the event, it was not likely that Saul and his sons could escape in the general slaughter of the vanquished. From the probable results of the approaching conflict, did the witch of Endor hazard, not to predict, but from observation of circumstances to prognosticate the fate of Saul and his sons. Those who, with large powers of observation, and well defined reasoning faculties, have watched the current of events, are likely to anticipate with some degree of accuracy, the probable results. If, in the course of time, some coinciding circumstance takes place, then is the prognostication brought into view, and the supernatural powers of the prophet are acknowledged. In this light we must view the words put into the mouth of the apparition, predicting the death of Saul and his

sons. The event was to be expected as the natural result of the anticipated defeat and overthrow of the king.

The supposition that the witch of Endor was more than a mere impostor, rests upon such slight evidence, that it is not necessary to enter further into the consideration of her case. The whole system of art and delusion on her part bears the impress of juggling imposture, rather than the daring invasion of demons on the province of almighty power.

Whether the apparition was personified by an accomplice of the wicked impostor, or the phantom of Saul's highly excited, and consequently diseased imagination, is of minor importance, and can be viewed in either case, only as an additional evidence, that the witch of the Hebrews was not capable of anything beyond the practice of juggling artifice and paltry imposture.

The coincidence of the death of Saul and his sons, as foretold by the apparition, is no proof of the Deity permitting the laws of nature to be suspended for the purpose of enabling a wretched impostor to foretel the occurrence. It does not appear that Saul saw the apparition, but that he was only informed by the woman of its appearance; nor does her description of it afford sufficient evidence of the semblance of the apparition to that of the person of the deceased prophet. The apparition might exist only in the diseased imagination of Saul, and the incident of his untimely death be impressed upon his mind as the result of his anticipated defeat. This gloomy foreboding of Saul corresponded with the prediction of the apparition, and its actual occurrence gave a kind of prescience to his own feelings. In the wars of the ancients, it was customary for the conquerors to slay the chiefs or leaders of the vanquished party, in order to insure the permanency of the victory gained; Saul consequently looked forward with painful anxiety to an untimely death.

It is not an uncommon circumstance for persons under strong excitement, to mistake strong mental impressions for information they suppose to be given them by some

other real or supposed person. In such cases the individual gives expression to these feelings in the strongest language ; and as this state of mental excitement often arises from a strong conviction of the event actually occurring, or from an intense desire that it should take place, if the event predicted, or something parallel or similar to it, happens to occur, the prognosticator is then considered to have a knowledge of the secrets of futurity, and the circumstance corroborating the prophecy is considered as an incontrovertible proof of its truth.

We have a case of this description in that of Michael Bruce, one of the Scottish clergy who figured in the time of the Covenanters. On the day of the battle of Killiecrankie he preached in Anworth, and in his preface before prayer, according to his usual homely way of expressing himself, he began to this purpose:—"Some of you will say, what neuse, Minister? What neuse about Clavers, who has done so much mischief in this country? That man settis up to be a young Montrose; but as the Lord liveth he shall be cutt short this day. Be not afraid," added he, "I see them scattered and flying; and as the Lord liveth, and sends this message by me, Claverhouse (shall) no longer be a terror to God's people. This day I see him killed; lying a corps."

According to Wodrow, Claverhouse, that very day, about the same time, was actually killed.

The vivid impression of the death of Claverhouse on the mind of Michael Bruce, can only be accounted for, from his natural tendency to great mental excitement, the warmth of his temperament and the activity of his imagination, and the event of which he speaks, having actually occurred at, or about the time, when he gave expression to the evanescent imagery of his waking dream; and to those of his hearers who from sympathy were inspired with the ardour of his feelings, it seemed the fulfilment of a positive prediction, or prophetic vision. The coincidence was striking and remarkable. Had the event not occurred at that time, his remarkable words would have been remem-

bered, only as the warm effusions of his enthusiasm in the cause of the persecuted remnant of the suffering kirk.

Coincidences more remote than the one just stated have been adduced as incontrovertible evidence of individuals being really endowed with prophetic powers, and a foreknowledge of future occurrences. To steal a march on the measured tread of time, and by an over-curious eye to pry into the secrets of futurity, was held unlawful; yet this did not prevent numbers at the risk of life from pretending to this supernatural power, and others at that of reputation from seeking a response at their forbidden shrine. In illustration of this we may state, on the authority of Reginald Scot, the case of the Earl of Arran, chancellor to King James VI. The lady of the Earl, embued with all the curiosity of her sex, and deeply impressed with the superstitions of the times, being eager to know how far her ambitious views might be realized, applied to a celebrated witch or sorcerer for this information, and was answered in reply, that "she should be the greatest woman in Scotland, and her husband should have the highest head in the kingdom." This response may be said to have been literally verified, but certainly in a very different manner from that which she anticipated. The lady is recorded to have died of dropsy, "very ill swelled in an extraordinary manner;" and the Earl having been slain on the Borders, his head was borne on the point of a spear!

In the view we have taken of the story of the woman at Endor, we have considered her to be the prime mover of the deception practised upon Saul, and that her claims to a knowledge of futurity rested upon her observation of present circumstances, whence she presumed to prognosticate future events. But the historian, while he relates with clearness the response given to Saul by the apparition, has nevertheless left us entirely ignorant of the evidence of the actual appearance of the apparition, either to Saul or to those that were with him. That the historian mentions the raising of Samuel as a fact, and that the king believed the response recorded in the history to have been actually



given by the prophet is not to be doubted, but whether the conviction of Saul accorded with the fact, or was produced by means of a deception or mental illusion, is a question that remains unsolved.

It is well known that in particular states of mind men are liable to mistake strong mental impressions for information which they suppose to be given them by some other person, or by phantoms which exist only in a highly excited or diseased imagination. One thing is certain respecting the apparition of Samuel, that no one except the Pythoness herself is said to have seen it; neither does it appear that Saul himself saw it, or was aware of its presence, otherwise than from the description given by the witch.

In cases of high mental excitement, when the control of the understanding is suspended, and imagination holds an undisputed sway over the reasoning powers—when darkness reflects but dimly, the pale images which fancy has portrayed, and terror has filled up the outline, and removed the individual beyond the common sympathies of life—then does consciousness succumb to the reveries of phantasy, and the attenuated spectre occupies the place of corporeal reality. This state of mental feeling may be brought on by a high excitement of the nervous system, or by excessive watchfulness, accompanied by the fear and apprehension of the appearance of some expected apparition. That this was the situation in which Saul was placed does not admit of doubt. A general gloom had given colour to his reflections, and his hope had withered under the painful apprehension of coming evil; his fears were alarmed by a consciousness of guilt, and the darkness of despair gave a painful reality to his anticipated sufferings. In this state of mental excitement, we find him waiting, in dread suspense, the appearance of an apparition which he yet trembled to look upon. The powers of imagination, when strongly excited, take precedence of those of reason and reflection, and the false imagery thus created is mistaken for realities.

Such visions however are seldom seen, unless aided by

darkness, and when terror has suspended the government that reason ought to maintain over the other faculties. In all these respects Saul was in a frame of mind the most fitting to be deceived by phantoms of his own creation.

That it was anything else than a mere spectral illusion that appeared unto Saul, seems undeniable; or rather, which is more probable, the description given to him by the witch, of its appearance and form, accorded so much with his own fears and apprehensions, that an impression was made upon his mind so vivid, that its reality was not called in question by him.

A striking evidence of the fallacy of spectral illusions is, that no two persons together, at the same time and at the same place ever saw one. Each, if he has seen anything, has seen a different kind of spectre. If any visible object existed, it would be seen by all situated within the sphere of distinct vision; neither is any mere idea ever communicated by ghosts, whether they assume the form of men or devils. They speak the preconceived notions, and assume the figure and costume anticipated by those who see them.

In confirmation of this we may notice a case recorded in the new series of the *Edinburgh Medical and Physical Journal*, No. 9, of Mary Irvin, aged 24, who imagined she had seen the departed spirit of the deceased wife of her master. She was an ignorant, credulous woman, of strong muscle and masculine form; and had been accustomed to hard fare and severe agricultural labour. From the time she had entered into the service of the widower, her work had been trifling, compared with the labour to which she had been formerly accustomed, and improved diet added to her naturally sanguine disposition.

Her master having lost his wife, a short time before she entered his service, and, as was reported, by disease brought on by a sense of shame and disgrace which she endured in consequence of having a child to her husband previous to marriage, it was told to the girl that it was impossible for her master's late wife, after such a death, to

rest in her grave, and that she must haunt her husband. Being much left alone in the house she was much agitated on this account, and her brain became much excited from fear of seeing this apparition. The apparition, as she expected, did appear, and so violent was the shock upon her nervous system that an attack of 'idiopathic tetanus' was the consequence. The apparition had appeared to her several times, and exactly resembled in person and dress her master's late wife. She consulted with her neighbours, learned in the knowledge of apparitions, who told her she must speak to the ghost when it appeared again, because ghosts could not speak until spoken to. She accordingly, on its next appearance, did muster up sufficient courage to address it, and consequently received a message from it to her master, which she was enjoined to deliver to no one else. All attempts to convince her of the fallacy of the appearance of the spectre were in vain; of its real appearance, as well as of the reality of the conversation, she was fully persuaded. Spectral illusions, besides being produced by a highly excited state of the nervous system, may often be traced to a morbid or diseased state of the brain, and may occur without previous association or fear respecting apparitions.

One of the most authentic instances of this that has been recorded, is that of Mons. Nicolai, the celebrated bookseller of Berlin. This learned and scientific gentleman laid before the philosophical society of that place, an impartial account of his own sufferings, and the leading circumstances that led to a series of mental delusions which he could not resist, notwithstanding the assurance of his better judgment, that the phantoms were merely imaginary:—

"Those who pretend to have seen and heard ghosts," says this writer, "obstinately maintain, that they perceived these apparitions by means of their senses. In order to defeat that belief, we generally desire them to consider how many people have been imposed upon by artful novices, and how liable we are to deceive ourselves; we advise

them to lay hold of the supposed spectres, assuring them, that they are generally found to be of a very corporeal nature. But those who have a predilection for the miraculous, pay no regard to these objections; insisting, that the productions of their disordered imaginations are real beings. We cannot, therefore, collect too many of such well-substantiated facts, as show how easily our imagination imposes on us erroneous notions, and deludes not only delirious persons, but even those who are in the full possession of their faculties, by causing them to see phantoms which scarcely can be distinguished from real appearances.

“I have myself experienced a case of this nature, which to me appears highly remarkable, both psychologically and medicinally; I saw, in a state of mind completely sound, and after the first terror was over, with perfect calmness, for nearly two months, almost constantly and involuntarily, a vast number of human and other forms, and even heard their voices, though all this was merely the consequence of a diseased state of the nerves, and an irregular circulation of the blood.

“I had, in January and February of the year 1791,” continues this author, “the additional misfortune to experience several extremely unpleasant circumstances, which were followed on the 24th of February by a most violent altercation. My wife and another person came into my apartment in the morning, in order to console me, but I was too much agitated by a series of incidents, which had most powerfully affected my moral feeling, to be capable of attending to them. On a sudden, I perceived, at about the distance of ten steps, a form like that of a deceased person. I pointed at it, asking my wife if she did not see it? It was but natural that she should not see any thing; my question, therefore, alarmed her very much, and she sent immediately for a physician. The phantasm continued about eight minutes. I grew at length more calm, and being extremely exhausted, fell into a restless sleep, which lasted about half an hour. The physician

ascribed the apparition to a violent mental emotion, and hoped there would be no return; but the violent agitation of my mind had in some way disordered my nerves, and produced farther consequences, which deserve a more minute description.

“At four in the afternoon, the form which I had seen in the morning re-appeared. I was by myself when this happened, and being rather uneasy at the incident, went to my wife’s apartment, but there likewise I was prevented by the apparition, which, however, at intervals disappeared, and always presented itself in a standing posture. About six o’clock there appeared also several walking figures, which had no connexion with the first.

“After the first day the form of the deceased person no more appeared, but its place was supplied with many other phantasms, sometimes representing acquaintances, but mostly strangers; those whom I knew were composed of living and deceased persons, but the number of the latter was comparatively small. I observed the persons with whom I daily conversed did not appear as phantasms, these representing chiefly persons who lived at some distance from me.

“These phantasms seemed equally clear and distinct at all times, and under all circumstances, both when I was by myself, and when I was in company, and as well in the day as at night, and in my own house as well as abroad; they were, however, less frequent when I was in the house of a friend, and rarely appeared to me in the street. When I shut my eyes, these phantasms would sometimes vanish entirely, though there were instances when I beheld them with my eyes closed, yet, when they disappeared on such occasions, they generally returned when I opened my eyes. I conversed sometimes with my physician and my wife of the phantasms which at the moment surrounded me; they appeared more frequently walking than at rest, nor were they constantly present. They frequently did not come for some time, but always re-appeared for a longer or shorter period, either singly or in company, the latter, however, being most frequently

the case. I generally saw human forms of both sexes, but they usually seemed not to take the smallest notice of each other, moving as in a market place, where all are eager to press through the crowd; at times, however, they seemed to be transacting business with each other. I also saw several times people on horseback, dogs, and birds. All these phantasms appeared to me in their natural size, and as distinct as if alive, exhibiting different shades of carnation in the uncovered parts, as well as in different colours and fashions in their dresses, though the colours seemed somewhat paler than in real nature; none of the figures appeared particularly terrible, comical, or disgusting, most of them being of an indifferent shape, and some presenting a pleasing aspect. The longer these phantoms continued to visit me, the more frequently did they return, while, at the same time, they increased in number about four weeks after they had first appeared. I also began to hear them talk; the phantoms sometimes conversed among themselves, but more frequently addressed their discourse to me; their speeches were commonly short, and never of an unpleasant turn. At different times there appeared to me both dear and sensible friends of both sexes, whose addresses tended to appease my grief, which had not yet wholly subsided: their consolatory speeches were in general addressed to me when I was alone. Sometimes, however, I was accosted by these consoling friends while I was engaged in company, and not unfrequently while real persons were speaking to me. These consolatory addresses consisted sometimes of abrupt phrases, and at other times they were regularly executed.

"Though my mind and body were in a tolerable state of sanity all this time, and these phantasms became so familiar to me that they did not cause me the slightest uneasiness, and though I even sometimes amused myself with surveying them, and spoke jocularly of them to my physician and my wife, I yet did not neglect to use proper medicines, especially when they began to haunt me the whole day, and even at night, as soon as I awaked."

The case of Nicolai, though traced remotely to a series



of disagreeable incidents, aided by the consequences of neglecting a course of periodical bleeding, is yet to be distinctly understood as the effect of a deranged state of the brain. Before, however, entering into this part of the inquiry, we would take the liberty of stating, shortly, a remarkable instance detailed at length in Sir Walter Scott's *Letters on Demonology*, of a case communicated to him by a medical gentleman, under whose observation it fell, and whose attainments in science and philosophy form an undisputed claim to the most implicit credit.

The unhappy individual who is the subject of this singular story, is stated to have been a gentleman highly esteemed in his profession, of unusual steadiness, good sense, and integrity, and though principally confined to his sick room, he yet seemed to exert his mind with all its usual strength and energy, to the conduct of important affairs entrusted to him; nor did there, to a superficial observer, appear any thing in his conduct, while so engaged, that could argue vacillation of intellect, or depression of mind.

He, however, occasionally showed symptoms of malady, which did not fail to alarm his family, and his slowness of pulse, absence of appetite, difficulty of digestion, and constant depression of spirits, seemed to indicate their existence, and to draw their origin from some hidden cause, which he was determined to conceal. His worldly affairs were prosperous; no family loss had occurred which could be followed with such continued distress: no entanglements of affection could apply to his age, and no sensation of severe remorse could be consistent with his character.

The physician, by a series of well applied arguments, at length prevailed upon the patient to disclose the secret source of his fatal disease. Every person, with the exception of the physician, being removed, the door being made secure, and other precautions taken to ensure the secrecy of recital, the patient began by intimating, that the cause of the lingering illness which he was conscious was soon to terminate in death, was none other than the

idea that he was haunted by an apparition, and although he was quite convinced, that it arose from a morbid imagination, he was yet sensible he was dying a wasted victim to an entirely imaginary disease, which, in spite of his naturally strong understanding, was leading him onwards to a premature grave. The following is the account he gave of the progress of his disease.

“My visions,” he said, “commenced two or three years since, when I found myself embarrassed by the presence of a large cat, which came and disappeared, I could not exactly tell how, till the truth was finally forced upon me, and I was compelled to regard it as no domestic household cat, but as a bubble of the elements, which had no existence save in my deranged visional organs or depraved imagination. Still I had not that positive objection to the animal, entertained by a gallant Highland chieftain, who has been seen to change to all the colours of his plaid, if a cat, by accident, happened to be in the room with him, even though he did not see it. On the contrary, I am rather a friend to cats, and endured with so much equanimity the presence of my imaginary attendant, that it had become almost indifferent to me; when, within the course of a few months, it gave place to, or was succeeded by a spectre of a more important sort, or which, at least, had a more imposing appearance. This was no other than the apparition of a gentleman-usher, dressed as if to wait upon a Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, a Lord High Commissioner of the Kirk, or any other who bears on his brow the rank and stamp of delegated sovereignty.

“This personage, arrayed in a court dress, with bag and sword, tamboured waistcoat, and chapeau-brass, glided beside me like the ghost of Beau Nash; and whether in my house, or in another, ascended the stairs before me, as if to announce me in the drawing-room; and at some times appeared to mingle with the company, though it was sufficiently evident that they were not aware of his presence, and that I alone was sensible of the visionary honours which this imaginary being seemed desirous to render me.

“This freak of the fancy did not produce much impression on me, though it led me to entertain doubts on the nature of my disorder, and alarm for the effect it might produce on my intellect. But that modification of my disease also had its appointed duration. After a few months, the phantom of the gentleman-usher was seen no more, but was succeeded by one horrible to the sight, and distressing to the imagination, being no other than the image of death itself—the apparition of a *skeleton*. Alone, or in company,” said the unfortunate invalid, “the presence of this last phantom never quits me. I in vain tell myself an hundred times over, that it is no reality, but merely an image summoned up by the morbid acuteness of my own excited imagination and deranged organs of sight. But what avail such reflections, while the emblem at once, and the presage of mortality is before my eyes, and while I feel myself, though in fancy only, the companion of a phantom, representing a ghostly inhabitant of the grave, even while I yet breathe on the earth? Science, philosophy, even religion, has no cure for such a disorder; and I feel too surely that I shall die the victim to so melancholy a disease, although I have no belief whatever in the reality of the phantom which it places before me.”

The physician was distressed to perceive, from these details, how strongly this visionary apparition was fixed in the imagination of his patient. He generously urged the sick man, who was then in bed, with questions concerning the circumstances of the phantom’s appearance, trusting he might lead him, as a sensible man, into such contradictions and inconsistencies, as might bring his common sense, which seemed to be unimpaired, so strongly into the field, as might combat successfully the fantastic disorder which produced such fatal effects. “This skeleton then,” said the doctor, “seems to you to be always present to your eyes?”—“It is my fate, unhappily,” answered the invalid, “always to see it.”—“Then I understand,” continued the physician, “it is now present to your ima-

gination?"—"To my imagination it certainly is so," replied the sick man.—"And in what part of the chamber do you now conceive the apparition to appear?" the physician then inquired.—"Immediately at the foot of my bed; when the curtains are left a little open," answered the invalid, "the skeleton, to my thinking, is placed between them, and fills the vacant space."—"You say you are sensible of the delusion," said his friend; "have you firmness to convince yourself of the truth of this? Can you take courage enough to rise and place yourself in the spot so seeming to be occupied, and convince yourself of the illusion?" The poor man sighed, and shook his head negatively. "Well," said the Doctor, "we will try the experiment otherwise." Accordingly he rose from his chair by the bedside, and placing himself between the two half drawn curtains at the foot of the bed, indicated as the place occupied by the apparition, asked if the spectre was still visible. "Not entirely so," replied the patient, "because your person is betwixt him and me; but I observe his skull peering above your shoulders." The physician resorted to other means of investigation and cure, but with equally indifferent success. The patient sunk into deeper and deeper dejection, and died in the same distress of mind in which he had spent the latter months of his life, a melancholy instance of the power of a diseased imagination to kill the body, even when its fantastic terrors cannot overcome the intellect of the unfortunate individual who suffers under them.

Before entering into the consideration of the two cases just given, we would only add another from Beaumont's *World of Spirits*, as given by Dr. Hebbert in his *Philosophy of Apparitions*. It is dated in the year 1662, and relates to an apparition seen by the daughter of Sir Charles Lee, immediately preceding her death. The narrative was drawn up the Bishop of Gloucester, from the recital of the young lady's father.

"Sir Charles Lee, by his first lady, had only one daughter, of which she died in child-birth; and when she

was dead, her sister, the Lady Everard, desired to have the education of the child, and she was by her very well educated, till she was marriageable, and a match was concluded for her with Sir William Perkins, but was then prevented in an extraordinary manner. Upon Thursday night, she, thinking she saw a light in her chamber after she was in bed, knocked for her maid, who presently came to her; and she asked, 'why she left a candle burning in her chamber?' The maid said she left none, and there was none but what she had brought with her at that time; then she said it was the fire, but that, her maid told her, was quite out, and said she believed it was only a dream; whereupon she said, it might be so, and composed herself again to sleep. But about two of the clock she was awakened again, and saw the apparition of a little woman between her curtain and her pillow, who told her she was her mother, that she was happy, and that by twelve of the clock that day she should be with her. Whereupon she knocked again for her maid, called for her clothes, and when she was dressed, went into her closet, and came not out till nine, and then brought out with her a letter sealed to her father; brought it to her aunt, the Lady Everard, told her what had happened, and declared, that as soon as she was dead, it might be sent to him. The lady thought she had suddenly fallen mad, and thereupon sent presently away to Chelmsford for a physician and surgeon, who both came immediately; but the physician could discern no indication of what the lady imagined, or of an indisposition of her body; notwithstanding the lady would needs have her let blood, which was done accordingly. And when the young woman had patiently let them do what they would with her, she desired that the chaplain might be called to read prayers; and when prayers were ended, she took her guitar and psalm-book, and sat down upon a chair without arms, and played and sung so melodiously and admirably, that her music master, who was then there, admired at it. And near the stroke of twelve, she rose and sat herself down

in a great chair with arms, and presently fetching a strong breathing or two, immediately expired, and was so suddenly cold, as was much wondered at by the physician and surgeon. She died at Waltham, in Essex, three miles from Chelmsford, and the letter was sent to Sir Charles, at his house in Warwickshire; but he was so afflicted with the death of his daughter, that he came not till she was buried; but when he came, he caused her to be taken up, and to be buried with her mother at Edmon-ton, as she desired in her letter."

This is one of the most interesting ghost stories that we have upon record, and as Dr. Hibbert remarks, "the coincidence was a fortunate one; for, without it, the story would probably never have met with a recorder, and we should have lost one of the sweetest anecdotes that private life has ever afforded."

Though these waking visions are the mere illusive creations of a diseased or over-excited imagination, they are not on that account the less worthy of the attention of the philosopher, as well as the physician: and instead of being regarded with the terror of the vulgar, or the disdain of the sceptic, they claim the calm and unprejudiced researches of philosophy, for the purpose of tracing their various phenomena to natural causes, and accurately ascertaining their relation to the state of the brain and the external senses. Spectral phenomena are incidental to numerous diseases, and are more or less varied in proportion to the number of parts or organs of the brain affected by these diseases. This we conceive to be an important part of our inquiry, and as the influence of these organs upon the manifestations of mind enters minutely into our investigations, it is necessary, before proceeding, to offer a few remarks explanatory of the nature of mind, and the close relation in which it stands to the material organs, through whose medium it holds intercourse with surrounding objects.

In our remarks upon the nature of mind we do not presume to say what its essence may be. Human knowledge



stops short of this discovery. The nature of mind, and the way and manner in which it is united to our bodies, are doubtless for the wisest of purposes hidden from our view. Even of the essence of ponderous matter we have no conception; we know that a stone is hard, or rough, or smooth; that iron is opaque and malleable; that glass is transparent and brittle; that water, in its natural state, is solid, and by the addition of caloric becomes fluid or aeriform. These are properties of matter which we know from the evidence of our senses, but we know nothing of the elementary atoms which enter into the composition of these bodies. As little do we know of mind; we know only its qualities of sensation, thought, and feeling. We consequently do not stop to inquire, whether or not mind be matter or spirit. In the mind, consciousness of external things is excited through the medium of organs whose nerves ramify through the animal structure, and convey to its common centre, the brain, a knowledge of the qualities of these external objects. As we have already said, we know not what matter may be, neither can we define what spirit is. These give rise to opposing theories, but they change not the nature of mind; like the fabled phoenix, it rises from the flame of contention unchanged; the same inscrutable workmanship of an inscrutable creative power. So far as our present purpose is concerned, we view man as a compound of body and of mind, united in the most beautiful harmony with each other, and so closely allied, that whatever is the cause of pleasure or pain to the one, is also a source of happiness or misery to the other. If the body be idle, the mind is enervated. If the one be stunned with a blow, the other sinks into torpidity, without energy and without sensibility. In the bouyancy of youth, the mind is elastic as the light breeze of summer, and in the strength of manhood, it rises in glory to its meridian brightness; and when enfeebled age may no more endure the intensity of its powers, the mind, like the setting sun, retires, and withdraws, one by one its part-

ing beams, and reluctantly bids farewell to its cherished home.

The mind being the seat of thought and feeling, it consequently follows that there must be powers in the mind to think and feel. These powers we presume to be innate, having a specific constitution, each performing its function according to that constitution. How many of these powers or faculties there may be, is not yet fully ascertained; that they are numerous is admitted by almost all the writers upon mental philosophy. The system of Professor Dugald Stewart enumerates above forty, and a more recent system carries the number to thirty-six; but conjectures there may be others not yet ascertained. That the brain is the seat of these powers or faculties, is generally admitted, but a difference of opinion prevails, respecting the structure of that important organ. Some maintain that it acts as a single and undivided whole, while others with more propriety insist, that the brain is not a single *viscus*, but a congeries of parts, each of them the seat of a distinct and separate faculty, expressed with more or less energy, in proportion to the size, the health, and constitutional activity of the appropriate organ of the organ.

That the brain is an aggregate of distinct and separate organs, is supported by the fact, that one or more of its parts, manifesting certain faculties, may be injured or destroyed by accident or disease, and the other parts representing other faculties, remain perfectly sane and healthy.

These cursory remarks lead us to the conclusion, that the apparent imperfection of the mental faculties, as exhibited in infancy, in disease, and on the approach of old age and dissolution, is not to be referred so much to imperfection or decay in the faculties, as to the tone and vigour of the material organs on which the faculties, in this life, depend for their manifestation. If these organs be defective or diseased, then will the manifestations of mind assume a defective or diseased form. To use a familiar illustration; the mind is to the organs, by which it holds communica-

tion with external objects, as steam is to the machinery which it impels. In both cases, improve the machinery, and you facilitate and improve the product of each in a ratio corresponding to the perfection of the machinery employed.

In viewing the mind as a distinct and separate being, acting and acted upon through the medium of material organs, we have at once a proper solution of the numerous monomania with which individuals are afflicted. Among the numerous faculties of the mind, when in a state of high excitement, none are so liable to derangement as that of marvellousness or wonder. The function of this faculty seems to be a tendency to believe, embracing in its range, a full conviction of inspirations, presentiments, phantoms, &c. This faculty, when properly directed, is a valuable gift from the Creator. The world is full of wonders, and whether viewed in its vastness, or in the minutiae of its several parts, offers a rich field for the gratification of its desires; but if the organ of this faculty be diseased, then may the individual be led on to the grossest superstition, or be the victim of the most melancholy insanity. Persons of otherwise strong reasoning powers, as in the case of Nicolai, before quoted, may endure the most intense suffering from a diseased state of the organ of wonder. If the organs of the perceptive faculties be also deranged, then will the phantoms assume all the varieties of colour and form. Not only may the sense of vision be imposed upon by false impressions conveyed to the mind through the medium of the eye, but the senses of hearing, of touch, of taste, and smelling, are equally liable to be deceived by the phantoms of a disordered imagination. A very singular case of this description occurred lately, and failed not to excite considerable interest amongst the curious and professing part of the community.

“A man named John Rhodes, residing till within these few days in Dalton-lane, near Keighley, has been for about six weeks past subjected to a course of visits from a

character having the appearance of a gentleman, (visible only to himself,) and who is always tempting him to accept of money. According to the man's own account, this mysterious being made his first appearance some seven weeks ago, when he was sitting comfortably at home, free from all fear and apprehension, and introduced himself by asking him if he could not recollect, about two years ago, a debt of twenty-five shillings being demanded of him, and that not being able to pay it at the time, he wished that he had some money to pay it with, if it even came from the Devil. On recollecting the circumstance, the gentleman told him that he had come with the wished-for article, (showing him a large quantity of gold,) which he insisted upon him taking, telling him also that he claimed him as his own, through virtue of his former wish. On Rhodes signifying his determination to have nothing to do with either him or his money, he at last disappeared, expressing his intention of calling on him again, and making him comply. The man, thinking that he might be laughed at if he mentioned the case to any of his neighbours, kept it a profound secret for a considerable time; but, finding that the visits of the unearthly character were becoming longer and more frequent, and were repeated several times a-day, both when he was up and in bed; he at last made the case known to his neighbours, and implored their advice. Several of them accordingly volunteered to keep him company, and some to sleep with him; but all was of no avail, the visits being repeated the same as before, even when the house was filled with people, and although the apparition seemed to the poor fellow to speak with a voice like thunder, and was as visible to him as any other person present, still he was unheard and unseen by any of the rest. An attempt was next made to try the effect of prayer on banishing the intruder, and numbers of people, noted for their abilities in that line, went to render their best services, and some of them, possessed of more nerve than usual, continued sleeping and praying with him through the night, yet, although in some

few cases he disappeared during their efforts, according to their own account, he generally left such a smell of sulphur as almost to deprive them of the power of utterance. Bleeding had been tried with no better effect, together with a change of residence, but all to no purpose; he has (at the time of our information) actually given over working, and appears to be wasting through the effects of fear occasioned by the visits of this imaginary being, who appears relentless in his persecution."

Numerous cases of spectral illusions might be given, each of them dependent upon a morbid state of one or more organs of the brain; but as this will be noticed in its proper place, we proceed with the next important case of Witchcraft, namely, that of Sir George Maxwell of Pollok.

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### SECTION III.

#### CASE OF SIR GEORGE MAXWELL OF POLLOK.

THERE is a marked difference between the Bargarran case and the one we are going to narrate. Christian Shaw was only eleven years of age, when she accused twenty-four individuals with attempting to seduce her to the service of the Devil, and maintained, in the face of reason and common sense, that they were in the habit of appearing to her in their proper persons, although it could have been proven that the accused were at the time about their lawful business. The ignorance of the period, however, overlooked the unreasonableness of the accusation, and on the bare assertion of the infatuated girl, seven human beings, male and female, were burned to death on the Gallowgreen of Paisley. In the case of Sir George Maxwell or Pollok, we have no account of the Witches exhibiting themselves before that gentleman. Unlike Christian

Shaw, he was of mature years; was highly esteemed for his accomplishments and good natural qualifications. Sir George had been taken suddenly ill at Glasgow, and after he had been taken home was confined to his bed with severe bodily suffering. Now there was nothing uncommon in this; a physician was immediately sent for, who, by bleeding and other appliances reduced the fiery heat with which, it seems, he had been tormented. It chanced at that time, that a vagrant girl whom nobody in those parts knew, and who pretended to be dumb, had come to Pollokshaws. Pity, or something akin to it, had induced the inmates of Pollok House to permit the girl to visit there: doubtless, for the purpose of extending their charity to her.

This bad girl (her after-life warrants the epithet) asserted that a woman, whose son had broken into Pollok garden, had a figure of wax representing Sir George, into which pins were inserted, and that the figure and the pins were the cause of his illness.

A search was of course instituted, and the dumb girl must needs be of the party. On entering the accused party's house, she went straight to the fire-place, and from a hole in the wall immediately behind it, pulled out a waxen figure having a pin stuck in either side of it. In one part of the account of this affair we are told that on the finding of the figure, Sir George's sickness abated, but not to an observable degree. If the change was not observable, how did his attendants observe it? They must surely have been possessed of the powers that are usually ascribed to Witches, or they could not have known it. But let us attend to what Andrew Martin, servant to Sir George, says on the same subject, when emitting his deposition.

Martin asserts distinctly, that Sir George's sickness *did* abate and relent when the picture of wax was found in Janet Mathie's house. Lawrence Pollok swore to the same thing, and yet Sir George himself writes, that the abatement was not to an observable degree, and he must



have known what he was suffering better than his attendants.

Some time afterward an express came to Pollok house from the dumb girl, who had been at Pollok-town, (Shaws,) but could not get over the Cart, the river being swelled at the time, (how the express got over we are not told) intimating that John Stewart, Mathie's eldest son, had formed an effigy of clay for the purpose of taking away Sir George's life. She afterwards told that the figure was beneath the bolster among the bedstraw. Another search was accordingly made, and a clay effigy was found in the very place which the dumb girl had pointed out. On the finding of *this* figure, the narrative informs us, that Sir George did *observably* recover. Now, if the girl had never been absent from Pollok house during the time that elapsed between the finding of the first and second effigies, we would have been forced to believe that she had one or more accomplices; but the account that is given of the occurrence relates that she had been absent for several days, and there is not the least doubt, that she had, by her own artifice, conveyed both figures into the places where they were found. Her after-life is sufficient to convince us, that a girl of her character would eschew no species of wickedness that would bring destruction on the heads of those she hated, or would tend in the least degree to gratify her malignity. To make good our assertions, we subjoin a brief sketch of her future life, written by one who had conversed with her before she went to Edinburgh.

"Sir John Maxwell, at the end of the account which he sent to Mr George Sinclair, professor of philosophy in the college of Glasgow, says, It is to be noted the dumb girl, whose name was Janet Douglas, doth now speak, not very distinctly, yet so as she may be understood; and is a person that most wonderfully discovers things past, and doth also understand the Latin tongue, which she never learned.

"The following is the extract of a letter which was sent

to Mr George Sinclair, professor of philosophy in the college of Glasgow.

“‘When I was at Glasgow, in summer 1677, I was desirous to see the dumb girl, (Janet Douglas.) At my first incoming she declined to entertain discourse, but by friendly expressions, and giving her some money, I gained her. I first enquired anent her parentage. ‘I do not remember,’ says she, ‘of my parents, but only that I was called by the name of Janet Douglas by all people who knew me. I was kept when I was very young, by a poor woman who proved cruel to me, by beating and abusing me; whereupon I deserted the woman’s house, and went a-begging.’ I enquired next how she became dumb. She told me by reason of a sore swelling she took in her throat and tongue; but afterwards by the application of Album Græcum, ‘which I thought,’ said she, ‘was revealed to me, I recovered my speech.’ I asked her, how she came to the knowledge of Witches and their practices. She answered, that she had it only by a vision, and knew all things as well as if she had been personally present with them; but had no revelation or information from the voice of any spirit; nor had she any communication with the Devil, or any spirit of that kind; ‘only,’ says she, ‘the Devil was represented to me, when he was in company with any of the Witches, in that same shape and habit he was seen by them.’—She told me, she was altogether ignorant of the principles of religion, but had some smattering knowledge of the Lord’s prayer, which she had heard the Witches repeat, it seems, by her vision, in presence of the Devil; and at his desire, which she observed, they added to the word *art*, the letter *w*, which made it run, ‘Our Father which wart in heaven;’ and made the third petition thus, ‘As on earth so it may in heaven;’ by which means the Devil made the application of the prayer to himself.—I remember, that one day there was a woman in the town, who had the curiosity to give her a visit, who asked her, ‘How she came to the knowledge of so many things?’ But the young wench shifted her, by asking the

woman's name; she told her name; says the other, 'Are there any other in Glasgow of that name?' 'No,' says the woman. Then, said the girl, 'You are a Witch.' Says the other, 'Then you are a devil.' The girl answers, 'The Devil doth not reveal Witches; but I know you to be one, and I know your practices too.' Hereupon the woman ran away in great confusion, being indeed a person suspected of Witchcraft, and had been sometimes imprisoned on that account.—Another woman whose name was Campbell, had the curiosity likewise to come and see her, and began to ask some questions at her. The wench shifting to give her an answer, says, 'I pray you tell me where you were yesternight, and what you were doing?' 'And withal,' says she, 'let me see your arm;' she refusing, the landlord laid hold upon the woman, with some others in the house, and forced her to make bare her arm, where Janet Douglas showed them an invisible mark, which she had gotten from the Devil. The poor woman, much ashamed, ran home. A little time after, she came out and told her neighbours, that what Janet Douglas said of her was true; and earnestly entreated them that they would shew so much to the magistrates, that she might be apprehended, 'otherwise the Devil,' says she, 'will make me kill myself.' But the neighbours, judging her to be under a fit of distraction, carried her home to her house; but early the next morning the woman was found drowned in Clyde.—The girl likewise told me at Glasgow, being then under no restraint, that it was revealed to her she would be carried before the great council at Edinburgh, imprisoned there, and scourged through the town. All which came to pass.—For about a year after, she was apprehended and imprisoned in the tolbooth of Canongate, and was brought before the council, but nothing being found against her, she was dismissed; but thereafter, for several crimes committed within the town of Edinburgh, she was taken again, and imprisoned, scourged, and sent away to some foreign plantation; since which time I have not heard of her.—There are several other remarkable passages concerning

her, which I cannot inform you of, which others perhaps may do; therefore I shall abruptly break off, and say no more, but that I am your affectionate friend.' Mr Sinclair says, 'This information I have from a discreet understanding gentleman, who was one of myscholars at Glasgow several years ago.'"

Before laying the case of Sir George Maxwell before our readers, we may be allowed to remark, that every one of the persons accused in his case, confessed to the crime laid to their charge. We have, in a former part of this work, adverted to the means that were employed by those having authority to elicit a confession. To corroborate what we have stated, let us attend to what Hugo Arnott says on the same subject. "From the universal and excessive abhorrence entertained at a Witch, a suspicion of that crime, independant of judicial severities, was sufficient to render the unhappy object anxious for death. Thrusting of pins into the flesh, and keeping the accused from sleep, were the *ordinary* treatment of a Witch. But if the prisoner was endued with uncommon fortitude, other methods were used to extort confession. *The boots, the caspie-claws, and the pilnie-winks*, engines for torturing the legs, the arms, and the fingers, were applied to either sex; and that with such violence, that sometimes the blood would have spouted from the limbs. Loading with heavy irons, and whipping with cords, till the skin and flesh were torn from the bones, have also been the adopted methods of torment.

"The bloody zeal of those inquisitors attained to a refinement in cruelty so shocking to humanity,\* and so

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\* When Alison Balfour was accused of Witchcraft, she was put in the caspie-claws, where she was kept forty-eight hours; her husband was put in heavy irons, *her son put in the boots, where he suffered fifty-seven strokes*, and her little daughter, of about seven years of age, put in the pilnie-winks, in her presence, in order to make her confess. She did confess. She retracted her confession in the course of the trial; and publicly, at her execution, declared that the confession was extorted from her by the torments.—*Records of Justiciary, June 4th, 1596.*

repugnant to justice, as to be almost incredible. Not satisfied with torturing the person of the accused, their ingenious malice assailed the more delicate feelings and ardent affections of *the mind*. An aged husband, an infant daughter, would have been tortured in presence of the accused, in order to subdue her resolution. Nay, death itself did not screen the remains of these miserable persons from the malice of their persecutors. If an unfortunate woman, trembling at a citation for Witchcraft, ended her sufferings by her own hands, she was dragged from her house at a horse's tail, and buried under the gallows."\*

Such is the account given us by an eminent lawyer of the sufferings of those who were accused of Witchcraft. Who can read the above extract, and be surprised at any thing these unhappy creatures confessed? And yet the same author tells us, that there were some individuals who had moral courage enough to retain their integrity, and deny the absurd imputation, even when urged with the sharpest tortures.

The following most interesting anecdote relating to the terrible inquisition, exemplifying how the use of the diabolical engines of torture forces men to confess crimes they have not been guilty of, was related to Mr. D'Israeli by a Portuguese gentleman.

"A nobleman in Lisbon having heard that his physician and friend was imprisoned by the inquisition, under the stale pretext of Judaism, addressed a letter to one of the inquisitors to request his freedom, assuring him, that his friend was as orthodox a Christian as himself. The physician, notwithstanding this high recommendation, was put to the torture, and, as was usually the case, at the height of his sufferings, confessed every thing they wished. This enraged the nobleman, and, feigning a dangerous illness, he begged the inquisitor would come and give him his last spiritual aid.

“ As soon as the Dominican arrived, the lord, who had prepared his confidential servants, commanded the inquisitor, in their presence, to acknowledge himself a Jew ; to write his confession, and to sign it. On the refusal of the inquisitor, the nobleman ordered his people to put on the inquisitor's head, a red-hot helmet, which to his astonishment, in drawing aside a screen, he beheld glowing in a small furnace. At the sight of this new instrument of torture, ‘ Luke's Iron Crown,’ the Monk wrote and subscribed this abhorred confession. The nobleman then observed, ‘ See now the enormity of your proceeding with unhappy men ! My poor physician, like you, has confessed Judaism ; but with this difference, only torments have forced that from him, which fear alone has drawn from you ! ’ ”

We beg of those who may read the confessions of those individuals who were accused of bewitching Sir George Maxwell, to bear in mind the confession of the Monk of Lisbon.

The following account of the bewitching of Sir George Maxwell is taken from “ Crawford's History of Renfrewshire.”

“ Mr George Maxwell of Pollok, obtained the honour of knighthood from King Charles II. He was a gentleman of singular accomplishments, and justly esteemed a person eminent for piety, learning, and other good qualifications. Sir George deceased anno 1677. To whom succeeded John his son and heir ; which John was raised to the dignity of baronet, by King Charles II's letters patent, bearing date, at Whitehall, the 12th of April, 1682. He was, by King William, nominated one of his privy council for Scotland, upon the first constitution thereof ; and afterwards, in the year 1696, was appointed one of the lords commissioners of the treasury or exchequer ; and, in 1699, constituted one of the senators of the college of justice, and lord justice clerk.”

“ Letter which Sir John Maxwell of Pollok sent to George Sinclair, professor of philosophy in the college of



Glasgow, along with the account of the bewitching of his father.

*“ Pollok, 24th June, 1684.*

“SIR,

“I send you herewith the true account my father caused me write from his own mouth, which is the surest relation I can give, either of his own trouble, or of what concerns Janet Douglas, first discoverer of these pictures. There fell out some less material circumstances in the family, during her abode there, whereby it fully appeared, that she knew what was done in distant places, and understood languages. For instance, when a chapter in the Greek New Testament was read, she made us understand by signs what the purposes were, (for at that time she was dumb, whether really or counterfeitly, it is hard to determine) and did exactly give an account to myself, what we did at two miles distant from the place where she was, without any information given to her which I knew of. I rest your affectionate friend,

“JOHN MAXWELL.”

“Upon the 14th of October, 1676, my father was surprised at Glasgow, in the night time, with a hot and fiery distemper; and coming home the next day, he was fixed to his bed. The physician, fearing a pleurisy and a fever, opened a vein, and the application of medicaments being made, the fiery heat was abated; he remaining for seven weeks together under a great pain, chiefly in his right side, though not fixed to his bed. There had come to Pollok-town a young dumb girl, but from whence was not known, who had remained there for four weeks before, but seldom frequenting Sir George Maxwell's house, till at length she came to some more familiarity and converse with his two daughters. And, having observed Sir George sick and weak in his body, she signified unto them, that there was a woman, whose son had broke his fruit-yard, that did prick him in the sides.

“And seeing this woman one day in the hall of Pollok

amongst a great many other company, she assured his daughter, that this was the woman; and the day following, she told the gentleman, that this woman whose name was Janet Mathie, relict of John Stewart, (under-miller in Shaw-mill) had formed a wax picture with pins in the side, which was to be found in her house, in a hole behind the fire, offering to bring it unto them, providing she were accompanied with men to protect her from violence. At first they hardly understood her, till she went to one of the gentlewoman's closets, and bringing thence a little bees-wax, she plyed it before the fire, shewing the dimensions and quantity of the picture. The gentlewomen regarded not the information, because they thought it fabulous; yet his two servants, Laurence Pollock, and Andrew Martin, knowing how much the girl loved their master, and knowing that his life was in hazard, if this picture were not found, resolved at all adventures to try whether the information were true or false; and therefore going along with her to the said Janet Mathie's house, one of them planted himself on one side of the fire, and the other on the other side, while, in the mean time, the little girl coming quickly by Laurence Pollock, putteth her hand in the hole behind the fire, and then slips into Andrew Martin beneath his cloak, the waxen effigy, which had two pins in it, one in each side, but that in the right side, so long as to pierce through to the other; that in the left was not so long, nor so deeply thrust in. This picture being brought to Pollok, Sir George's son, without acquainting his father, apprehended Janet Mathie, procuring the next day the Lord Ross's order for conveying her to prison. She being interrogated touching the picture, after several subterfuges, alleged, 'It was the deed of the dumb girl.'

"It was also enquired, whether Sir George or his Lady had given her at any time provocation to this malice? But it was well known they had been courteous to her; and, upon her complaints, had rebuked some for spreading bad reports upon her name, as not appearing sufficiently well

founded to a conviction. Only upon the 14th of October above specified, before Sir George went to Glasgow, he had called before him a servant in Pollok-town, that had broken his orchard in harvest last, who confessed the fact, and that Hugh Stewart, a son of Janet Mathie's, was his complice. But a bye-stander declared, that he was not now in Pollok land, but in the Darnly. To whom Sir George replied, I hope my fingers may reach him in Darnly. This was all which could be thought a provocation to Mathie, no harm being done in the mean time to her son, whom Sir George to this hour doth not so much as know by the face, but hath suffered him all the time of his sickness to live in his mother's house, ever since her imprisonment. In the mean time Mathie remaining obstinate, was searched for insensible marks before the sheriff-depute of Renfrew, and many famous witnesses, at Paisley, and there were very many found upon her.

“ After the finding of the picture of wax foresaid, there was some abatement of Sir George's sickness, but not to any observable degree, so low was he brought. But upon the 4th of January following, his sickness recurred with that violence, that for four or five days, his friends and relations had no great confidence of his life. But they were more amazed on the 7th of January, being the sabbath-day, when they had an express from the dumb girl, who was at Pollok-town, but could not get over the water to the house, the river being so swelled at that time, signifying that John Stewart, Mathie's eldest son, had four days since formed an effigy of clay, for taking away Sir George's life. And when she was called for, she declared it was in his house, beneath the bolster, among the bed-straw.

“ The next day following, James Dunlop of Househill, and Ludowick Stewart of Achinhood, with some of Sir George's servants, went to Stewart's house, taking the little girl with them, resolving to make a very exact trial, that it might not be said, that the dumb girl had brought any thing hither. Wherefore they caused John Stewart

himself to light a candle and hold it, while Ludowick Stewart, and another did, in his sight, lift the clay effigy from among the bed-straw, beneath the bolster (the little girl all the while standing at a distance from the place,) but the picture having been made only three or four days before, and not sufficiently hard, did break into two pieces. In it were three pins, one in each side, and one in the breast. Stewart had nothing to say for himself, but that he knew not who had put that thing there. He was instantly apprehended, and so was a little sister of his, lately entered into the fourteenth year of her age, named Annabil Stewart, who was said to have whispered before somewhat of the waxen effigy. This poor creature proved thereafter, through God's favour, a key to the detection of making both the pictures.

"At first she was very obstinate, but the next day she confessed, 'That being present in her brother's house the 4th of January, while the clay picture was formed, the black gentleman being present, (which was the name she gave the Devil) together with Bessie Weir, Margery Craig, Margaret Jackson, and her brother John.' But when confronted with her brother, she did not with confidence adhere to her confession. Upon the finding of this picture, Sir George did very observably recover in his health, and all the pain which was in his side, did, by degrees, wear away.

"John Stewart remained, notwithstanding his sister's confession, above measure obstinate, until he was searched the next day for insensible marks, whereof he had great plenty; at the finding whereof, he was so confounded, that immediately he confessed his paction with the Devil, and almost all the other heads expressed in his judicial confession after-written; and declared, 'That his accomplices who formed the effigy with him were the same his sister had named.' She also came to a free and full confession of her paction with the Devil, and her accession to her forming both of the waxen picture in her mother's house, and of the clay one in her brother's house.

"Upon information of the premises, the Earl of Dundonald and the Lord Ross granted a warrant for apprehending Bessie Weir, Margaret Jackson, and Margery Craige, who had been fellow-sisters in the aforesaid sorcery.

"Margaret Jackson, a woman aged about fourscore of years, after a day or two, confessed paction with the Devil, and her accession to the making of both the pictures, and condescended upon the accomplices above named. Many insensible marks were found on her body.

"Upon the 17th of January last, a third portrait of clay was found under Janet Mathie's bolster in the prison house of Paisley, which the dumb girl had given information of. But it seemed to be the picture of some woman, and probably of some of the family of Pollok. For Annabil Stewart did freely declare, 'that their malice was against the whole family of Pollok.' For turning to young Pollock and his Lady, she said, 'And against you also.' This portrait was found before four famous witnesses.

"The lords of His Majesty's privy council, being informed of these pictures and effigies, the depositions of three confessing witches being sent, did grant a commission for their trial, and also for the trial of the other three that were obstinate. And in regard of the singularity of the case, they ordered the process to be very solemn, commissioning for the trial some judicious gentlemen in the country, viz., Sir Patrick Gauston of Gauston, James Brisbane of Bishopton, Sir John Shaw, younger of Greenock, and John Anderson, younger of Dovehill. To whom they added Mr John Preston, advocate, (a gentleman well seen in criminals, and who exercised the office of justice-depute for several years), a sine qua non in the commission. And that the whole process might be the more exact, they appointed George Lord Ross assessor, with power to vote and decide. And further ordered Mr Robert Martin, clerk to the justice court, to be clerk to the process, which was to be recorded in the public books of adjournal.

"The commissioners of justiciary held their first court at Paisley, the 27th of January 1677; before whom



Annabil Stewart, of the age of fourteen years, or thereby, when brought in the presence of the justices for the crime of Witchcraft, declared, that in harvest last, the Devil, in the shape of a black man, came to her mother's house, and required the declarant to give herself up to him; and that the Devil promised her she should not want anything that was good. Declares, that she, being enticed by her mother Janet Mathie, and Bessie Weir, who was officer to their several meetings, she put her hand to the crown of her head, and the other to the sole of her foot, and did give herself up to the Devil. Declares, that her mother promised her a new coat for doing it. Declares, that her spirit's name was Enippa\*, and that the Devil took her by the hand, and nipped her arm, which continued to be sore for half an hour. Declares, that the Devil, in the shape of a black man, lay with her in the bed under the clothes, and that she found him cold. Declares, thereafter he placed her nearest himself. And declares, that she was present in her mother's house when the effigy of wax was made; and that it was made to represent Sir George Maxwell. Declares, that the black man, Janet Mathie, the declarant's mother, (whose spirit's name was *Landlady*,) Bessie Weir, (whose spirit's name is *Sopha*,) Margery Craige, (whose spirit's name is *Rigerum*,) and Margaret Jackson, (whose spirit's name† is *Locas*,) were all present at the making of the said effigy; and that they bound it on a spit, and turned it before the fire; and that it was turned by Bessie Weir, saying as they turned it, Sir George Maxwell! Sir George Maxwell! and that this was expressed by all of them, and by the declarant. Declares, that the picture was made in October last. And farther declares, that upon the third day of January inst.,

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\* Sir George Maxwell's account says, "That the new name the Devil gave her, was Anippy."

† Sir George Maxwell's account says, Janet Mathie her mother, whose name was, from the Devil, *Landlady*, Bessie Weir, whose name was *Sopha*, Margery Craig, whose name was *Rigeru*, Margaret Jackson, whose name was *Locas*.



Bessie Weir came to her mother's house, and advised her to come to her brother John Stuart's, upon the night following : and that accordingly she came to the place, where she found Bessie Weir, Margery Craige, Margaret Jackson, and her brother John Stuart, and a man with black clothes, a blue band, and white handcuffs, with *hoggers*, and that his feet were cloven. And the declarant sat down by the fire-side with them, when they made a picture of clay, in which they placed pins in the breast and sides. And declares, that they placed one in every side, and one in the breast. Declared that the black man did put the pins in the picture of wax ; but is not sure who put in the pins in the picture of clay. Declares, that the effigies produced, are the effigies she saw made. Declares, that the black man's name is Ejoal. This declaration was emitted before James Dunlop, of Househill, William Gremlaye, &c., January, 27, 1677. Ita est Robertus Park, notarius publicus, &c.\*

“ The second confession is of John Stuart, who being interrogated anent the crime of Witchcraft, declared, that upon Wednesday the third day of January instant, Bessie Weir, in Pollok-town came to the declarant late at night, who being without doors near to his own house, the said Bessie Weir did intimate to him, that there was a meeting to be at his house the next day : and that the Devil, under the shape of a black man, Margaret Jackson, Margery Craige, and the said Bessie Weir were to be present. And that Bessie Weir required the declarant to be there, which he promised, and that the next night, after the declarant had gone to bed, the black man came in, and called the declarant quietly by his name ; upon which he rose from his bed, and put on his clothes, and lighted a candle. Declares, that Margaret Jackson, Bessie Weir, and Margery Craige, did enter in at a window, in the gavel of the

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\* Sir George Maxwell's account, says, this declaration was made before famous witnesses, subscribed by the two notaries public for her, Robert Park, younger, Patrick Carswell in Paisley, and subscribed by the commissioners.

declarant's house, and that the first thing that the black man required, was, that the declarant should renounce his baptism, and deliver himself wholly to him; which the declarant did, by putting one hand on the crown of his head, and the other on the sole of his foot. And that he was tempted to it, by the Devil's promising that he should not want any pleasure, and that he should get his heart filled on all that should do him wrong. Declares that he gave him the name of *Jonas* for his spirit's name.\* Declares, that thereafter the Devil required all their consents for the making of the effigies of clay, for the taking away the life of Sir George Maxwell of Pollok, to revenge the taking the declarant's mother, Janet Mathie. Declares, that every one of the persons above named gave their consent to the making of the said effigies, and that they wrought the clay, and that the black man did make the figure of the head, and face, and two arms, to the said effigies. Declares, that the Devil set three pins in the same; one in each side, and one in the breast; and that the declarant did hold the candle to them all the time the picture was making; and that he observed one of the black man's feet to be cloven; and that his apparel was black; and that he had a bluish band and handcuffs: and that he had *hoggers* on his legs without shoes: and that the black man's voice was *bough* and *goustie*. And farther declares that after they had begun the forming of the effigies, his sister Annabil Stuart, a child of thirteen or fourteen years of age, came knocking at the door, and being let in by the declarant, she staid with them a considerable time; but that she went away before the rest, he having opened the door to her. That the rest went out at the window at which they entered. Declares, that the effigies were placed by Bessie Weir in his bed-straw. He further declares, he himself had envy against Sir George Maxwell, for apprehending Janet Mathie his mother; and that Bes-

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\* Sir George Maxwell's account says, "That the new name given to him by the Devil was *Jonas*."

ie Weir had great malice against this Sir George Maxwell; and that her quarrel was, as the declarant conceived, because the said Sir George had not entered her husband to his harvest service: and also declares, that the said effigies were made upon the fourth day of January instant; and that the Devil's name was *Ejjoal*. Declares, that his spirit's name was *Jonas*; and Bessie Weir's spirit's name, who was officer, was *Sopha*; and that Margaret Jackson's spirit's name, was *Locas*; and that Annabil Stuart, the declarant's sister's, was *Enippa*; but does not remember what Margery Craige's spirit's name was. Declares, that he cannot write. This confession was emitted in the presence of the witnesses to the other confession, and on the same day. Ita est, Robertus Park, notarius publicus, &c.\*

"The confession of Margaret Jackson, relict of Thomas Stuart, in Shaws, who, being examined by the justices anent her being guilty of Witchcraft, declares that she was present at the making of the first effigies and picture that were made in Janet Mathie's house in October; and that the Devil in the shape of a black man, Janet Mathie, Bessie Weir, Margery Craige, and Annabil Stuart, were present at the making of the said effigies, and that they were made to represent Sir George Maxwell of Pollok, for the taking away his life. Declares, that forty years ago, or thereabout, she was at Pollokshaw-croft, with some few sticks on her back, and that the black man came to her, and that she did give up herself unto the black man, from the top of her head to the sole of her foot; and that this was after the declarant's renouncing of her baptism; and that the spirit's name which he designed her, was *Locas*. And that about the third or fourth of January instant, or thereby, in the night time, when she awaked, she found a man to be in bed with her, whom she supposed to be her husband, though her husband had been dead twenty years,

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\* Sir George Maxwell's account, says, "This confession had the same solemnities which the former had."

or thereby, and that the man immediately disappeared; and declares, that this man who disappeared was the Devil. Declares, that upon Thursday the 4th of January instant, she was present in the house of John Stuart, at night, when the effigy of clay was made, and that she saw the black man there, sometimes sitting, sometimes standing with John Stuart; and that the black man's clothes were black, and that he had white hand-cuffs; and that Bessie Weir in Pollok-toun, and Annabil Stuart in Shaws, and Margery Craige, were at the aforesaid time and place of making the said effigy of clay; and declares, that she gave her consent to the making of the same; and declares that the Devil's name, who compeared in the black man's shape, was *Ejoal*. Sic subscribitur, ita est, Robertus Park, notarius publicus, &c.\*

“One remarkable passage which is taken from Sir George Maxwell's account, runs thus:—The justice, upon the 27th of January, commanded the jailor to fix Janet Mahie's feet in the stocks, that she might not do violence to her own life. The man declared, ‘The next morning we had found her bolster, which the night before was laid at least six yards distant from the stocks, now placed beneath her; the stocks being so heavy, that two of the strongest men in the country could hardly have carried them six yards: he wondering, did ask her how she had win to the bolster;’ she answered, ‘That she had crept alongst the floor of the room, drawing the stocks to the same place.’ And before the court, she said, ‘She had gotten one foot free out of the hole, and with the other had drawn the stocks:’ a thing altogether impossible, the stocks being so weighty, nor was she able to take her foot out of the hole.

“Upon the 15th of February 1677, the justices being convened again at Paisley, John Stuart, and Annabil Stuart, with Margaret Jackson did adhere to their former

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\* Sir George Maxwell's account says, “This confession had the same solemnities which the two former had.”

judicial confession; but Janet Mathie, Bessie Weir, and Margery Cragie, did obstinately deny.

“Andrew Martin, servitor to the lord of Pollok, of the age of thirty years, or thereby, depones that he was present in the house of Janet Mathie, pannel, when the picture of wax produced was found in a little hole in the wall at the back of the fire. Depones, that Sir George’s sickness did fall upon him about the 18th of October, or thereby. Depones, that the picture of wax was found on the ——— of December, and Sir George’s sickness did abate and relent about the time the picture of wax was found and discovered in Janet Mathie’s house. Depones, that the pins were placed in the right and left sides; and that Sir George Maxwell of Pollok’s pains, as he understood by Sir George’s complaining of these pains, lay most in his right and left sides. And depones, that Sir George’s pains did abate and relent after the finding of the said picture of wax, and taking out of the pins as is said. And depones, that the pannel Janet Mathie has been by fame and bruit reputed a witch these several years by-past. And this is the truth, as he shall answer to God. Sic, subscrib. Andr. Martin.

“Laurence Pollock, secretary to the lord of Pollok, sworn and purged of partial counsel, depones, that on the ——— day of December, he was in the pannel Janet Mathie’s house when the picture was found; and that he did not see it before it was brought to the pannel’s door. Depones, that Sir George Maxwell of Pollok’s sickness did seize upon him about the fourteenth of October, or thereby, and he did continue in his sickness or distemper for six weeks or thereby. Depones, that Sir George’s sickness did abate and relent after the finding of the said picture of wax, and taking out of the pins that were in the effigies. Depones, that by open bruit and common fame, Janet Mathie, and Bessie Weir, and Margery Craige, are branded to be witches. Depones, that the truth is this, as he shall answer to God. Sic, subscrib. Laurence Pollock.



“Ludowick Stuart of Auchinwood, being sworn and purged of partial counsel, depones, that Sir George’s sickness fell upon him the fourteenth or fifteenth of October, or thereby. Depones, that he was not present at the finding of the picture of wax, but that he had seen Sir George Maxwell of Pollok after it was found, and having seen him in his sickness often-times before, he did perceive that Sir George had sensibly recovered after the time that the said picture was said to be found, which was upon the 11th or 12th of December. Depones, that Janet Mathie and Margery Craige, two of the pannels, are, by report of the country, said to be witches. Depones, that he having come to Pollok, he did see Sir George Maxwell, whose pains did recur, and that his pains and torments were greatly increased in respect of what they were before the finding of the picture of wax. Depones, that upon the 8th of January, when they left the said Sir George Maxwell of Pollok, the deponent, James Dunlop of Househill, Allan Douglace, and several others, did go to the house of John Stuart, warlock, in Pollok-shaw, and there he found a picture of clay in the said John Stuart’s bed-straw. Depones, that there were three pins in the said picture of clay, and that there was one in each side, and one in the breast. And depones, that being returned to Sir George’s house, Sir George told the deponent that he found great ease of his pains, and that it was before the deponent, Househill, and the rest did reveal to him that they had found the said picture of clay; and further depones, that this is truth, as he shall answer to God. Sic, subscrib. Ludowick Stuart.

“The justices having examined all witnesses in matters of fact, touching the effigies, Sir George’s sickness, and the recovery of his health, upon the finding of the same, considering also the bad fame of those who were obstinate, and having confronted them with the confessing witches, who in their faces avowed their accession, in manner expressed in the confessions above written. Considering, lastly, all other circumstances of their case, committed



them to the trial of a judicious inquest, who being found guilty, were condemned to the fire to be burned, and their effigies with them. Only Annabil, in regard of her non-age, and the evidences she seemed to give of her penitency, was reprieved by order of the council, but to remain in prison. In the meantime, both she and her brother John did seriously exhort her mother to confession; and with tears, did Annabil put her in mind of the many meetings she had with the Devil in her own house; and that a summer's day would not be sufficient to relate what she had seen pass between the Devil and her; but nothing could prevail with her obdured and hardened heart."

In taking a review of the cases already cited, we are led to the conclusion, that the belief in Witchcraft is a superstition of a most absurd and calamitous nature. At the time of which we write, this belief was general, and the few who opposed this notion did so at their peril. Nor was the belief in the existence of apparitions less prevalent than in that of Witchcraft. The impressions made on the mind of infancy, by the relation of ghost stories, were so powerful that no future knowledge could wholly eradicate the associations formed, or remove the impressions of terror which these stories inspired. Philosophers the most enlightened, teachers of religion the most eminent, and judges the most upright, were found deeply imbued with those darker superstitions; and the more illiterate classes of the people believed them as a necessary part of biblical faith. It is therefore the less surprising that the hallucinations arising from monomania, or partial derangement, were often mistaken for the effects of Witchcraft, instead of being placed to the account of debility or disease. But the progress of science has now triumphed over the errors of superstition, and its fatal consequences are now fast being removed altogether.

During the reign of superstition, it is not a little remarkable that individuals were found who gloried in the idea of being supposed witches, and of being in league with the Prince of darkness. However extravagant this may appear,

there is no doubt of the fact; for hundreds made open confession of the supposed crime, and gloried in it before the tribunals that judged them to the stake, while many others mistook their own fears and apprehensions as evidence of their guilt, and, when under the infliction of torture, readily admitted themselves guilty of a crime which they did not understand. The following story, as related by Sir Walter Scott, in his *Letters on Demonology and Witchcraft*, forcibly shows to what extent the influence of Witchcraft was carried in the seventeenth century.

“During the halcyon period of union between kirk and king, their hearty agreement on the subject of Witchcraft failed not to heat the fires against the persons suspected of such iniquity. The clergy considered that the Roman Catholics, their principal enemies, were equally devoted to the Devil, the mass, and the witches, which, in their opinion, were mutually associated together, and natural allies in the great cause of mischief. On the other hand, the pedantic sovereign, having exercised his learning and ingenuity in the *Demonologia*, considered the execution of every witch who was burnt, as a necessary conclusion of his own royal syllogisms. The juries were also afraid of the consequences of acquittal to themselves, being liable to suffer under an assize of error, should they be thought to have been unjustly merciful; and as the witches tried were personally as insignificant as the charge itself was odious, there was no restraint whatever upon those in whose hands their fate lay, and there seldom wanted some such confession as we have often mentioned, or such evidence as that collected by the minister who overheard the dialogue between the witch and her master, to salve their consciences and reconcile them to bring in a verdict of Guilty.

“The execution of witches became, for these reasons, very common in Scotland, where the king seemed in some measure to have made himself a party in the cause, and the clergy esteemed themselves such from the very nature of their profession.

“But the general spite of Satan and his adherents was

supposed to be especially directed against James, upon account of his match with Anne of Denmark—the union of a protestant princess with a protestant prince, the king of Scotland, and heir of England, being, it could not be doubted, an event which struck the whole kingdom of darkness with alarm. James was self-gratified by the unusual spirit which he had displayed on his voyage in quest of his bride, and well disposed to fancy that he had performed it in positive opposition, not only to the indirect policy of Elizabeth, but to the malevolent purpose of hell itself. His fleet had been tempest-tost, and he very naturally believed that the Prince of the power of the air had been personally active on the occasion.

“The principal person implicated in these heretical and treasonable undertakings, was one Agnes Sampson, or Samson, called the Wise Wife of Keith, and described by Archbishop Spottiswood, not as one of the base or ignorant class of ordinary witches, but a grave matron, composed and deliberate in her answers, which were all to some purpose. This grave dame, from the terms of her indictment, seems to have been a kind of white witch, affecting to cure diseases by words and charms, a dangerous profession, considering the times in which she lived. Neither did she always keep the right and sheltered side of the law in such delicate operations. One article of her indictment proves this, and at the same time establishes, that the Wise Woman of Keith knew how to turn her profession to account; for, being consulted in the illness of Isobel Hamilton, she gave her opinion that nothing could amend her unless the Devil was raised; and the sick woman’s husband startling at the proposal, and being indifferent perhaps about the issue, would not bestow the necessary expenses, whereupon the Wise Wife refused to raise the Devil, and the patient died. This woman was principally engaged in a conspiracy to destroy the fleet of the queen by raising a tempest; and to take the king’s life by anointing his linen with poisonous materials, and by constructing figures of clay, to be wasted and tormented after the usual fashion of necromancy.

“Amongst her associates was an unhappy lady of much higher degree. This was Dame Euphane MacCalzean, the widow of a Senator of the College of Justice, and a person infinitely above the rank of the obscure witches with whom she was joined in her crime. Mr Pitcairn supposes, that this connexion may have arisen from her devotion to the Catholic faith, and her friendship for the Earl of Bothwell.

“The third person in this singular league of sorcerers was Doctor John Fian, otherwise Cunninghame, who was schoolmaster at Tranent, and enjoyed much hazardous reputation as a warlock. This man was made the hero of the whole tale of necromancy, in an account of it published at London, and entitled, “News from Scotland,” which has been lately reprinted by the Roxburgh Club. It is remarkable that the Scottish Witchcrafts were not thought sufficiently horrible by the editor of this tract, without adding to them the story of a philtre being applied to a cow’s hair, instead of that of the young woman for whom it was designed, and telling how the animal came lowing after the sorcerer to his school-room-door, like a second Pasiphaë, the original of which charm occurs in the story of Apuleius.

“Besides these persons, there was one Barbara Napier, alias Douglas, a person of some rank; Geillis Duncan, a very active witch, and about thirty other poor creatures of the lowest condition,—among the rest, and door-keeper to the conclave, a silly old ploughman, called as his nickname Graymeal, who was cuffed by the Devil for saying simply, ‘God bless the King!’

“When the monarch of Scotland sprung this strong covey of his favourite game, they afforded the Privy Council and him sport for the greater part of the winter. He attended on the examinations himself, and by one means or other, they were indifferently dressed to his palate.

“Agnes Sampson, the grave matron before mentioned, after being an hour tortured by the twisting of a cord around her head, according to the custom of the Buccancers,

confessed that she had consulted with one Richard Grahame, concerning the probable length of the king's life, and the means of shortening it. But Satan, to whom they at length resorted for advice, told them in French respecting king James, *Il est homme de Dieu*. The poor woman also acknowledged that she had held a meeting with those of her sisterhood, who had charmed a cat by certain spells, having four joints of men knit to its feet, which they threw into the sea to excite a tempest. Another frolic they had, when, like the weird sisters in Macbeth, they embarked in sieves, with much mirth and jollity, the Fiend rolling himself before them upon the waves, dimly seen, and resembling a huge haystack in size and appearance. They went on board of a foreign ship richly laden with wines, where, invisible to the crew, they feasted till the sport grew tiresome, and then Satan sunk the vessel and all on board.

"Fian, or Cunninghame, was also visited by the sharpest tortures, ordinary and extraordinary. The nails were torn from his fingers with smiths' pincers; pins were driven into the places which the nails usually defended; his knees were crushed in *the boots*; his finger bones were splintered in the pilniewinks. At length his constancy, hitherto sustained, as the bystanders supposed, by the help of the Devil, was fairly overcome, and he gave an account of a great witch-meeting at North Berwick, where they paced round the church *withershins*, that is, in reverse of the motion of the sun. Fian then blew into the lock of the church door, whereupon the bolts gave way, the unhallowed crew entered, and their master the Devil appeared to his servants in the shape of a black man, occupying the pulpit. He was saluted with an "Hail Master!" but the company were dissatisfied with his not having brought a picture of the king, repeatedly promised, which was to place his majesty at the mercy of this infernal crew. The Devil was particularly upbraided on this subject by divers respectable-looking females,—no question, Euphane MacCalzean, Barbara Napier, Agnes Sampson, and some other



amateur witch above those of the ordinary profession. The Devil, on this memorable occasion, forgot himself, and called Fian by his own name, instead of the demoniacal *sobriquet* of Rob the Rower, which had been assigned to him as Master of the Rows or Rolls. This was considered as bad taste, and the rule is still observed at every rendezvous of forgers, smugglers, or the like, where it is accounted very indifferent manners, to name an individual by his own name, in case of affording ground of evidence which may, upon a day of trial, be brought against him. Satan, something disconcerted, concluded the evening with a divertisement and a dance after his own manner. The former consisted in disinterring a new-buried corpse, and dividing it in fragments among the company, and the ball was maintained by well nigh two hundred persons, who danced a ring dance, singing this chant :—

‘Cummer, gang ye before, Cummer, gang ye !  
Gif ye will not gang before, Cummers, let me !’

“After this choral exhibition, the music seems to have been rather imperfect, the number of dancers considered. Geillis Duncan was the only instrumental performer, and she played on a Jew’s harp, called in Scotland a *trump*. Dr. Fian, muffled, led the ring, and was highly honoured, generally acting as clerk or recorder, as above mentioned.

“King James was deeply interested in those mysterious meetings, and took great delight at being present at the examinations of the accused. He sent for Geillis Duncan, and caused her to play before him the same tune to which Satan and his companions led the brawl in North Berwick churchyard. His ears were gratified in another way, for at this meeting it was said that the witches demanded of the Devil why he did bear such enmity against the king ? who returned the following answer, that the king was the greatest enemy whom he had in the world.

“Almost all those poor wretches were executed, nor did Euphane MacCalzean’s station in life save her from the common doom, which was strangling to death, and burning to ashes thereafter.”



There cannot be a doubt that the judges and jury who sat on the above case, were firm believers in the existence of Witchcraft, and consequently would consider themselves as doing not only man, but God a service, in ridding the earth of wretches who had entered into a coalition with the being who was the professed enemy of both. But when the belief in Witchcraft was most generally diffused among mankind, there were individuals to be found, wicked enough to take advantage of the ignorance of the times, for the purpose of turning the current of popular opinion to their own interests; or what was more, to gratify their malignant passions, by bringing to shame, or possibly to death, individuals against whom they bore a secret grudge.

The following account of the trial and execution of Urbain Grandier, curate of Loudon, which we have extracted from Frank Hall Standish's *Life of Voltaire*, will abundantly show to our readers what malice could do in the days when a charge of sorcery could affect the lives and characters of individuals. The story speaks volumes for itself, and, therefore, we lay it before our readers without further comment; merely premising, that from the case of Grandier the reader may learn, that neither rank in life, superiority of talent, nor a character for piety, are proofs against the poisonous influence of wicked men, who, it is to be lamented, too often cloak their nefarious designs under the specious disguise of sanctity.

"The trial, to which we are now brought by the train of the subject, will for ever cast a stain over the beginning of the seventeenth century;—it might almost be said over the religion, the country, and the minister who directed the proceedings.

"The personal hatred and the policy of Richelieu, condemned to the rack and the fire a priest, whose greatest crime might, perhaps, be a levity of conduct amply atoned for by his talents and his piety.

"Urbain Grandier, born of a respectable family, and possessed of personal advantages and talents not generally

bestowed, had obtained great credit as an orator at Loudon, of which he was the curate. He soon excited the envy of his rivals : civil and kind to his friends, he had not the policy to conceal from his adversaries the pride which the consciousness of superior abilities gives to personal dislike. Being appointed to execute a sentence of the law against a priest of the name of Monnier, he caused it to be performed with the greatest rigour. This man, joined with another of the name of Mignon, against whom the curate of Loudon had gained a lawsuit, and who was the director of the convent of the Ursulines. The natural passion which Grandier possessed for gallantry, and the advantages of his address, enabled him to obtain great favours from a young girl at Loudon, a daughter to the procureur to the king. It was in vain that a kind friend asserted, that he was the father of a female infant newly born ; the public was, in this case, proof against deceit, and decided the accusation. -

“ Trinquant, the father of the girl and uncle to Mignon, was at the head of a league to which the advocate of the king, who was the rival of Grandier, joined himself. They bribed two persons, who accused the curate of debauchery in his own church with several young girls and married women ; the office for justice received the complaint, and appointed an investigation. Whilst the lawsuit was conducting, Grandier was insulted during the performance of his sacerdotal duties by a man of the name of Thibaut, who dared to offer him a blow. Despairing of obtaining justice in a country where he had so many enemies, he proceeded to Paris, in order to throw himself at the feet of the king and demand justice ; but, during his absence, they obtained from the Bishop of Poitiers an order to seize his body, dated the 22d of October, 1629. Du Thibaut intrigued with such efficacy, that Grandier was obliged to go to Paris ; at his arrival he was thrown into a damp and unwholesome dungeon, and the bishop of the diocese passed a sentence the 3d of January, 1630, by which Grandier was suspended from the exercise of his sacerdotal functions

for the space of five years in any part of France, and for ever at Loudon ; he was also ordered to fast on bread and water every Friday for three months. His enemies were not satisfied, and applied to the parliament, who refused to interfere, and dismissed the matter to the tribunal of Poitiers. The witnesses were examined, but varied in their testimony, and many confessed that they had been seduced by money ; the prosecution was declined, and Grandier obtained an absolution from the Bishop of Bourdeaux. Contrary to his advice, however, he commenced an action against his accusers, and Du Thibaut was condemned to several fines, and publicly reprimanded.

“ About this time Mossaut, who was the director of the convent of the Ursulines, died ; he was replaced by Mignon. The young nuns of the order ran about at night for their amusement or pleasure, and complained that they were possessed ; the old ones believed in good earnest what their juniors had asserted. Mignon knew the truth ; but not losing sight, for a moment, of the opportunity for destroying his enemy, he counselled these women to call for Grandier as their confessor. The curate of Loudon refused to comply, and it appears certain, that he never entered the convent ; for when the members of it were confronted with him in 1634, he was not recognised by a single individual. Mignon accordingly began to exorcise ; he made a visionary priest (who was desirous of passing for a saint in the opinion of the populace) a confidant in the business ; and, in order to give greater publicity to the possession of the Ursulines, he walked in procession with his parishioners at Loudon. The two impostors arranged the plot, and when they thought, that the appearances of the possession were sufficiently complete to be examined by those not in the secret, they chose Granger, the curate of Vesnier, a man of extraordinary impudence, to proceed and acquaint the magistrates. This ridiculous interview took place on Monday the 11th of October, 1632, with two magistrates of Loudon. They repaired to the convent to examine every thing themselves ; Mignon, however, went there before

them, dressed in a surplice and a stole.\* He told them, that the evil spirits had been expelled; that the Devil, who had been in the superior mother, was called Astaroth, and that of the lay-sister, Zabulon; but that at that time the nuns were asleep.

“As the magistrates were about to depart, it was announced to them, that those bewitched were again troubled; they ascended with Mignon and Granger into a chamber at the top of the house, where the superior and a lay-sister were in bed; they were surrounded by members of the community. Manouri, a surgeon, was present, with Rousseau the canon of Sainte Croix. At the sight of the officers of justice, the superior, falling into strange convulsions, uttering cries which resembled those of a little pig, and making horrible grimaces, hid her head under the bed-clothes. One of the sisterhood was on her right hand and Mignon on her left; he put his two fingers into her mouth, and conjured the Devil to walk out, in Latin. The possessed answered very ill to his inquiries, but pointed out Grandier as the author of her malady; the lay-sister was not willing to answer, saying, that the superior was the only one capable of so doing. The magistrates having learnt, that the matter had been already examined by Gregnard, the ecclesiastical judge, took notes and a written account of the whole.

“On Monday the 12th, they called Mignon in private, and told him, that the possession was a pious fraud, and that it was necessary to hinder its progress; he, however, maintained that it was real. The design of the judges was to take more exact informations; they again visited the convent, accompanied by the Sieur Irénée. The superior seemed convulsed with passion; Barri exorcised the demon, who replied, that he had departed; the lay-sister also assisted at the ceremony. Whilst they were reading the prayers of exorcism, a great noise was heard in the company; one of the assistants exclaimed, that she

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\* A black band, with a cross upon it.

had seen a male cat come down the chimney; they searched for him all over the room, and found him at last under a bed, to which he had run for safety; they put him on the counterpane of the one which held the superior; Barri made several signs of the cross over the animal, who, however, was audacious enough to set up his back in spite of the Holy Ghost; he was recognised as an inmate of the convent, and imagined to be nothing less than a demon, or a magician. Though all these impositions were badly planned, Grandier feared the power of the conspiracy which was proceeding against him, which had been just reinforced by the father of Cardinal Richelieu, against whom a publication had appeared during the time of his disgrace, attributed to the pen of Grandier. He accordingly obtained an order to prevent any person slandering him; this order is of the 28th of October, 1632.

“During the time that Grandier was exorcising in Paris, the evil spirits were dispersed all over the town of Loudon; six of the girls, residing in it, fancied themselves possessed, and others that they were bewitched. In the town of Chinon, the Devil, like an old friend, encamped himself in the body of two of the penitents of Barri. Laubardement, a creature of the court, being informed of this, arrived at Loudon the 6th December, 1632, at eight o'clock at night, and communicated his full powers of the court to some of the town's people. The contemporary authors thus recount the arrest of Grandier.

“Guillaume Aubin, who had the jurisdiction over the ecclesiastical concerns of the district, was sent for by Laubardement; who, after having communicated to him the orders of the king, desired him to seize Grandier. Aubin informed the curate of Loudon of this secret order, and clandestinely advised him to withdraw; but he did not think it right to profit by these suggestions, and was accordingly arrested one morning, on his way to the church of Sainte Croix. Immediately after he was taken, the royal seal was affixed to all his property; they found among his papers the treatise composed on the celibacy



of the priests, which he acknowledged to be written by himself, but denied having any concern in the authorship of two poems which were also discovered. His mother in vain pleaded the sentences of absolution of the Archbishop of Bourdeaux; the inventory was finished the 31st January, 1632. Pierre Fournier, who had accepted the office of lawyer to the crown, declined acting almost immediately after his acceptance. The case, however, proceeded; but Laubardement being apprehensive that the parliament would interfere, obtained an order from the privy council for its prevention; he also threw Grandier into a prison, which was rendered as frightful and miserable as possible, and to which was added the precaution of passing bars of iron across the chimney, for fear the Devil should come to the assistance and effect the escape of the magician; a woman of the name of Bontemps also watched over him in his confinement, and notified each day his actions. To give a better appearance to the story of the possession, they distributed those who were supposed to be bewitched into three parties; and, at the earnest request of Grandier, all apparent communication was broken off between the patients. Grandier wished, by an innocent stratagem, to cause this monstrous edifice of falsehood to fall of itself; he proposed to Laubardement that four priests should be habited in the way he was himself attired, and to ask of those possessed which of the five was the magician; but this was refused.

“On the 26th of April they proceeded to search for the marks of the magician. Manouri, the brother-in-law of one of those who pretended they were possessed, entered the prison of Grandier, caused a bandage to be passed over his eyes, and pulled off all his garments. When he was desirous of persuading those who surrounded him, that the parts of the body marked by the Devil were insensible, he turned the probe he held in his hand by one of the round ends, so that not being able to pass through the flesh, it was driven back into the hands of the surgeon; but, when the barbarous operator wished to shew, that the



other parts of the body were not enchanted, he turned the instrument by the sharp end, and drove it in as far as the bone of the unfortunate victim, whose cries and groans were heard at a considerable distance. The Devil was waiting the arrival of his friend the Bishop of Poitiers to operate wonders. On Saturday the 17th he gave a pass-over, composed of the flesh of the heart of a child, taken at a sabbath held at Orleans in 1631; and of the ashes of a burnt host. This passover was presented to the supposed magician; he denied its existence; and he was allowed to exorcise. 'I consider,' said he to the bishop, 'that a magician cannot possess a Christian without his own consent.' The exorcists exclaimed, that Grandier was a heretic, and that he rejected a proposition received in the catholic church, and approved by the Sorbonne.

"After this discussion, they brought sister Catherine, who refused to answer his Greek, under pretence that the host of the Devil, which she had eaten, did not permit her to speak. Grandier put a question to her in the same language, but all those present uttered loud cries, calling him magician, and threatening to strangle him. 'If I am a magician,' said he, 'may the Devil put a mark on my forehead here, in the presence of these magistrates of the king.' The exorcists, to the number of eight, imposed silence on the demons; a small furnace was brought, and the hosts burnt. This scene of juggling ended, the nuns took off their slippers, and threw them at the head of Grandier, who was chanting the service. The last day of June, one of those possessed, whom they were exorcising, declared, with the greatest effrontery, that Grandier had sent a thing which modesty forbids the writer to describe, to several girls to make them conceive monsters, and the true word for which she bellowed out with the greatest impudence. The stupid exorciser asked why the effect had not been produced; she replied, with a torrent of obscenities, such as are never heard but in the lowest houses of prostitution. The public indignation was at its height; and, to stifle its murmurs, Laubardement was obliged to

publish an ordonnance forbidding any one, of any class or condition soever, to speak ill of these religious persons possessed with evil spirits in Loudon, under a penalty of ten thousand livres, or even a larger sum, as the nature of the case deserved. This was dated the 2d of July, 1634. The subsequent course of the affair clearly justified Grandier; the sister Claire, agitated with remorse, declared that all she had asserted was false and a calumny, and that she had done it at the suggestion of Mignon and the others. Four days after, she continued stedfast in the same statement, and was desirous of making her escape. The sister Agnese withdrew herself from the communion, and said she was unworthy to receive our Saviour. Another also declared that an innocent man was accused; but the exorcists asserted, that all which had been uttered was at the suggestion of the Devil, who spoke falsehoods when they were favourable, and truths when they were unfavourable, to Grandier. The commission charged with the trial assembled at the convent of the Carmelites the 26th of July, and on the 27th named for recorders two enemies to the curate of Loudon. The populace presented petitions against the injustice of Laubardement, requesting that the curate might be tried by the parliament of Paris, or some other court. This, however, all the commissioners represented as an assembly of the dregs of the people, not to be entitled to any credit, and their address was unavailing.

“Grandier, seeing that appeals in his favour were useless, no longer hesitated in the certainty of his destruction. It was undoubted, that he must either be burnt as a sorcerer, or that all his enemies would be submitted to the most heavy punishments; he nevertheless prepared his defence. Being admitted before the judges, he thus addressed them:—  
 ‘With the most profound humility I beseech you to consider with attention what the Prophet says in the eighty-second Psalm, which contains a holy remonstrance for you to exercise your duties with rectitude, since being mortal men you will have to appear before the Almighty God, sovereign judge of the world, to render him an account of

your administration. This Spirit of the Lord now addresses you; the Lord is Lord in the assembly of the judges. Do justice to the poor, and help the aged and distressed, and deliver them from the hands of the wicked. You are children of the Lord; some time or other you will die like men, and you, who are now my hearers, will die like the rest.' This remonstrance produced no effect; the commissioners wished to cover their assassination under the cloak of religion; they ordered processions and public prayers, and called on Heaven to enlighten them.

"The 18th of August, the commissary judges assembled at the convent of the Carmelites, and gave judgment. The treatise of Grandier *on the Celibacy of Priests* was ordered to be burnt with him. Grandier heard with great resolution the sentence of his condemnation, and thus addressed the judges:—'Gentlemen, I call to witness God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the holy Virgin, who are my sole advocates, that I have never been a magician, and that I am totally unacquainted with sorcery; that I know no other magic than that of the holy scriptures, which I have always preached; and that I have no other belief, than that of our holy mother the catholic, apostolic, and Roman church. I renounce the Devil, all his vanities, and all his works; I acknowledge my Saviour, and I pray to him, that the blood of his cross may be meritorious to me and to you my judges, I pray you to moderate my punishment, and not to cast my soul into despair.'—Having thus spoken, he shed tears in abundance. Laubardement, taking him aside, said, 'If you wish to moderate the rigour of your punishment, declare your accomplices.' 'Being innocent,' replied Grandier, 'I have no accomplices.' Houmain entreated him to depose against the magicians; but they could obtain from him nothing further. According to the terms of the sentence, Grandier was put to the torture.

"At Loudon, the custom was to lay two planks together, and to bind between them the legs of the criminal; they then drove in wedges with blows of a hammer, which

broke the bones; and when the planks were untied, the splinters fell upon the ground. They allotted Grandier two wedges more than were generally given to the greatest criminals. Laubardement was present at the punishment. The monks exorcised the planks and the wedges. The wretched Grandier several times fainted away under the torture; they made him recover his senses by redoubling the blows: when his legs were beaten together, so that the marrow showed itself, they took away the planks, and cast him upon a hand-barrow. The curate did not allow a single imprecation to escape him, protested his innocence, and accused no one. He said, that he never had known this Elizabeth Blanchard, very far from having any intercourse with her. They from thence proceeded into the Chamber of Council: he was put upon some straw near the fire, and demanded an Augustine priest to confess himself, which was refused. He was delivered against his own will into the hands of the exorcisers. They made the people retire, who pressed round the spectacle. The registrar of the commission remained near him for the space of three hours, and Laubardement entreated him during this time to sign a memorial he held in his hand, which Grandier as constantly refused.

Towards five o'clock in the evening, the executioners carried him away upon a sieve. He declared to the lieutenant, who had the charge of criminals at Orleans, that he was dying innocent, and entreated him for his prayers to the just God in his behalf. In spite of his sufferings his look was tranquil, and his countenance collected. On leaving the place of trial, they read over again to him the articles of his accusation. When he arrived before the church of Saint Pierre du Marché, Laubardement ordered him to descend from the cart. As he had lost the use of his limbs, he fell prostrate with his face against the ground. He waited with patience till they lifted him up again. The father Grillau approached at this instant, and mingled tears with his embrace. 'I bring you the blessings of your mother, the church, and I pray God to have mercy

upon you, and to receive you into his kingdom.' Grandier returned him thanks for the pity his misfortunes had inspired, and entreated him to serve his mother as a son. The officer on guard solicited his pardon. 'You have not offended me,' said Grandier, 'you are obliged to fulfil the duties of your station.'

"They now approached the stake. The curate of Loudon gazed on it without alarm. The executioner placed him in an iron girdle, causing him to turn his back on the church of Sainte Croix. The articles of impeachment were again read, with his replies. Having finished, they asked him, if he persisted in all he had uttered. He replied that he did. The exorcisers, after having made signs of the cross over the funeral pile, were fearful, that he might profit by an indulgence which had sometimes been granted, and which, in their opinion, mitigated the severity of his tortures; it was, that he should be hanged, instead of burnt, and address the people before his execution. As he was going to harangue them, the exorcisers threw holy water on his face, and, observing that he was making a second attempt, they sent a monk to embrace their victim. The curate of Loudon, aware of this hypocrisy, exclaimed, 'Behold a kiss of Judas.' Enraged by this observation, the clergy struck him on the head with a crucifix of iron. He was obliged to wait till they had finished a *Salve* and an *Ave Maria*, to make a final protestation of his innocence. The monks managed not to have him strangled. Grandier, seeing the executioner with a lighted torch in his hand, claimed the promise of the judge. The father Lactance took some flaming straw, and threw it on his face, exclaiming, 'Wilt thou not acknowledge thy sin, wretch, and renounce the Devil?' 'I never knew him,' replied Grandier, 'and renounce him; I hope for the mercy of God.'

"Without waiting for the order of the civil officer, the monks set fire to the pile. Grandier exclaimed, 'Where is thy compassion, Father Lactance? There is a Judge in heaven, and I order you to appear in his presence within



a month.' Then, giving himself up to his Redeemer, he exclaimed, '*Deus meus, ad te vigilo, miserere mei, Deus*, (My God, I have faith in thee, pity me, O God.)'

"Perhaps some Christians might have relaxed in their belief on an occasion so trying, or forsaken their faith with their sufferings. Holy water was then thrown in his face, for fear the populace should hear his last words. The cry was to strangle him, but the monks had tied the cord, and the unfortunate curate of Loudon was burnt alive. The place destined for the execution could not contain the number of the curious. A flock of doves alighted upon the dying embers; the staffs of the soldiery and the cries of the people could not drive them away. A large fly fluttered round the ashes of Grandier: the clergy exclaimed that it was Beelzebub, who had come to seize the soul of the magician. The father Lactance died a month after Grandier, and the capuchin Tranquille expired about the same time in convulsions of the satyriasis. The populace, instigated by their spiritual leaders, invoked them as saints; every street-porter was desirous of having a little bit of their clothes. The father in God, Tranquille, would have been buried naked, if a guard had not been placed to prevent the depredations of the pious who surrounded, and who, after having stripped off his garments, would have cut the body itself. The following epitaph was fixed on his tomb:—'Here lies the humble Father Tranquille, Capuchin Preacher. The Demons, not being able any longer to resist his courage in his employment of exorcist, have caused him to die by their persecutions, instigated to this by the magicians, the last day of May, 1633.'

"The above trial\* contains the most circumstantial de-

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\* See the *Histoire des Diables de Loudon, ou de la Possession des Religieuses Ursulines*, Amsterdam, 1716. The history of the trials and atrocities of religious communities may be curious and interesting, but is so far unsatisfactory, as to make the reader disgusted with the religion he ought to adore.



tails of the injustice which it was in the power of the clergy to inflict, at a time when superstition confronted sense, and aggravated malice, and which still partially prevailed even under the reign of Louis XIV. In latter years, the instructions that the lower classes received have enlightened their minds, and improved their views, and no sabbath-meetings are now supposed to be held, even in those places where the fear of the Devil still exists."

The limits which we have prescribed to ourselves, and the number of cases which lie before us, render it necessary, in making our selection, to lay before our readers, those only which differ the most in their general features. In the Bargarran and Pollok cases we have seen that artifice, fraud, or probably disease, acting upon an ignorant community, led the way to deeds of blood, which disgraced the age in which such occurrences took place. The case of Grandier, on the other hand, exhibits a band of wicked men leaguering themselves together for the express purpose of destroying a fellow mortal who differed from them in nothing so much as in the amiableness of his disposition, and the goodness of his intentions. The superstitions of the times gave the greatest scope to villains to perpetrate, under the cloak of the law, crimes of the deepest dye, and, what is more to be lamented, the legislators of the different countries of Europe were not backward to assist them in their nefarious designs.

The case which we are about to lay before our readers is of a different description. A worthless fellow had, it seems, lost his drum, and the house of the magistrate, who had deprived him of his noisy appurtenance, was soon after subjected to the nightly visits of a seemingly interminable drumming. We have no evidence that the drum had anything like *malice propense* against the individual who took away the drum; but it was almost to be expected that the person who had lost what, possibly, was the only means of procuring his livelihood, would do everything in his power to vex or irritate the perhaps over-officious magistrate. The story, however, is worthy of the intelli-

gence of the age in which it took place, and forms another link in the great chain which hands down to us, the credulities and the superstitions of our fathers, while we,

“ In winter’s tedious nights, sit by the fire  
With good old folks ; and let them tell the tales  
Of woeful ages long gone betid.”

“ Mr. John Monpesson of Tedworth, in the County of Wilts, being about the middle of March, in the year 1661, at a neighbouring town called Ludlow, and hearing a drummer beat there, he enquired of the bailiff of the town at whose house he then was, what it meant. The bailiff told him, that they had for some days past been annoyed by an idle drummer, who demanded money of the constable by virtue of a pretended pass, which he thought was counterfeited. On hearing this, Mr. Monpesson sent for the fellow, and asked him by what authority he went up and down the country in that manner with his drum. The drummer answered, that he had good authority, and produced his pass, with a warrant under the hands of Sir William Cawley, and Colonel Ayliff, of Gretenham. Mr. Monpesson, however, being acquainted with the handwriting of these gentlemen, discovered that the pass and warrant were counterfeit, upon which he commanded the vagrant to lay down his drum, and at the same time gave him in charge to a constable, to carry him before the next justice of the peace, to be farther examined and punished. The fellow then confessed that the pass and warrant were forged, and begged earnestly to be forgiven and to have his drum restored : upon this Mr. Monpesson told him, that if, upon enquiry from Colonel Ayliff, whose drummer he represented himself to be, he should turn out to be an honest man, he should listen to his entreaty and have the drum back again ; but that, in the mean time, he would take care of it. The drum, therefore, was left in the bailiff’s hand ; and the drummer went off in charge of the constable, who, it appears, was prevailed upon, by the fellow’s entreaties, to allow him to escape.

"About the middle of April following, at a time when Mr. Monpesson was preparing for a journey to London, the bailiff sent the drum to his house. On his return from his journey, his wife informed him that they had been very much alarmed in the night by thieves, and that the house had like to have been torn down. In confirmation of this alarm, Mr. Monpesson had not been above three nights at home, when the same noise was again heard which had disturbed the family in his absence. It consisted of a tremendous knocking at the doors, and thumping on the walls of the house; upon which Mr. M. got out of bed, armed himself with a brace of pistols, opened the street door to ascertain the cause, which he had no sooner done, than the noise removed to another door, which he also opened, went out, and walked round the house, but could discover nothing, although he heard a strange noise and hollow sound. He had no sooner returned and got into bed, than he was again disturbed by a noise and drumming on the top of the house, which continued for a length of time, and then gradually subsided, as if it went off into the air.

"The noise of thumping and drumming, after this, was very frequent; usually for five nights together, when there would be an intermission of three. The noise was on the outside of the house, which principally consisted of board; and usually came on just as the family was going to bed, whether that happened early or late. After continuing these annoyances for a month on the outside of the house, it at length made bold to come into the room where the drum lay, four or five nights in every seven; coming always on after they had got into bed, and continuing for two hours after. The signal for the appearance of the noise was the hearing of a hurling of the air over the house; and when it was about to retire, the drum would beat the same as if a guard were being relieved. It continued in this room for the space of two months, during which time Mr. Monpesson lay there to observe it. In the early part

of the night, it used to be very troublesome, but after it had continued two hours, all would be quiet again.

"During the prevalence of this disturbance, Mrs. Monpesson was brought to bed, and the night on which this occurrence took place, there was but very little noise made, nor any at all for the three subsequent weeks of her confinement. After this polite and well-timed cessation, it returned in a sudden and more violent manner than before; it followed and teased their youngest children, and beat against their bedstead so violently that every moment they were expected to be broken to pieces. On placing their hands upon them at this time, no blows were felt, although they were perceived to shake exceedingly. For an hour together the drum would be at roundheads and cuckold, the tat-too, and several other martial pieces, as well as any drummer could possibly execute them. After this, a scratching would be heard under the children's beds, as if something that had iron claws were at work. It would lift the children up in their beds, follow them from one room to another, and for a while only haunted them, without playing any other pranks.

"There was a cockloft in the house, which had not been observed to be troubled; and to this place the children were removed; and were always put to bed before daylight disappeared, but here they were no sooner laid, than their disturber was at his work again with them.

"On the fifth of November, 1661, a terrible noise was kept up; and one of Mr. Monpesson's servants observing two boards moving in the children's room, asked that one might be given to him; upon which a board came (nothing moving it that he saw) within a yard of him; the man said again, *let me have it in my hand*; when it was brought quite close to him, and in this manner it was continued moving up and down, to and fro, for at least twenty minutes together. Mr Monpesson, however, forbade his servant to take liberties with the invisible and troublesome guest in future. This circumstance took place in the daytime, and was witnessed by a whole room full of people.

The morning this occurred, it left a very offensive sulphureous smell behind it. At night, the minister of the parish, one Mr Cragg, and several of the neighbours, paid Mr. M. a visit. The minister prayed at the children's bedside, when the demon was then extremely troublesome and boisterous. During time of prayer it retired into the cock-loft, but as soon as prayers were over it returned ; when in the presence and sight of the company, the chairs began to walk and strut about the room of their own accord, the children's shoes were thrown over their heads, and every thing loose moved about the room. At the same time, a bed-post was thrown at the minister, which struck him on the leg, but so gently that a lock of wool could not have fallen more gently ; and it was observed, that it stopped just where it fell, without rolling or otherwise moving from the place.

"In consequence of the demon tormenting the children so incessantly, he had them removed to a neighbour's house, taking his eldest daughter, who was about ten years of age, into his own chamber, where it had not been for a month before ; but, as soon as she was in bed, the noise began there again, and the drumming continued for three weeks with other noises ; and if any particular thing was called for to be beaten on the drum, it would perform it. The children were brought home again, in consequence of the house where they were placed being crowded with strangers. They were now placed in the parlour, which, it was remarked, had hitherto not been disturbed ; but no sooner were they here, than their tormentor, while they were in bed, amused himself with pulling their hair and bedgowns, without offering any other violence.

"It was remarked, that when the noise was loudest, and when it came with the most sudden and surprising violence, no dog about the house would move or bark, though the knocking and thumping were often so boisterous and rude, that they were heard at a considerable distance in the fields, and awakened the neighbours in the village, some of whom lived very near this house. Not unfrequently

the servants would be lifted up, with their bed, to a considerable height, and then let gently down again without harm; at other times it would lie like a great weight upon their feet.

"About the end of December, 1661, the drumming was less frequent, but then a noise like the chinking of money was substituted for it, occasioned, as it was thought, in consequence of something Mr. Monpesson's mother had said the day before to a neighbour, who spoke about fairies leaving money behind them; *viz.* that she should like it well, if it would leave them some to make them amends for the trouble it had caused them. The following night, a great chinking and jingling of money was heard all over the house. After this it left off its ruder pranks, and amused itself in little apish and less troublesome tricks. On Christmas morning, a little before daylight, one of the little boys was hit, as he was getting out of bed, upon a sore place on his heel, with the latch of the door, the pin of which, that fastened it to the door, was so small, that it was a matter of no little difficulty for any one else to pick it. The night after Christmas, it threw the old gentlewoman's clothes about the room, and hid her bible in the ashes; with a number of other mischievous tricks of the same kind.

"After this, it became very troublesome to one of Mr. Monpesson's servant men, a stout fellow, and of sober conversation. This man slept in the house during the greater part of the disturbance; and for several nights something would attempt to pull the bed-clothes off him, which he often, though not always, prevented by main force; his shoes were frequently thrown at his head, and sometimes he would find himself forcibly held, as it were, hand and feet; but he found that when he could use a sword which he had by him, and struck with it, the spirit let go his hold.

"Some short time after these contests, a son of Mr. Thomas Bennet, for whom the drummer had sometimes worked, came to the house, and mentioned some words to



Mr Monpesson that the drummer had spoken, which it seems were not well taken ; for they were no sooner in bed, than the drum began to beat in a most violent manner : the gentleman got up and called his man, who was lying with Mr. Monpesson's servant just mentioned, whose name was John. As soon as Mr. Bennet's man was gone, John heard a rustling noise in his chamber, as if a person in silks were moving up and down ; he immediately put out his hand for his sword, which he felt was withheld by some one, and it was with difficulty and much tugging, that he got it again into his possession, which he had no sooner done than the spectre left him ; and it was always remarked it avoided a sword. About the beginning of January, 1662, they used to hear a singing in the chimney before it descended ; and one night, about this time, lights were seen in the house. One of them came into Mr. Monpesson's chamber, which appeared blue and glimmering, and caused a great stiffness in the eyes of those who beheld it. After the light disappeared, something was heard walking or creeping up stairs, as if without shoes. The light was seen four or five times in the children's chamber ; and the maids confidently affirm, that the doors were at least ten times opened or shut in their presence ; and that, when they were opened, they heard a noise as if half a dozen had entered together ; some of which were afterwards heard to walk about the room, and one rustled about as if it had been dressed in silk, similar to that Mr. Monpesson himself heard.

“ While the demon was in one of his knocking moods, and at a time when many were present, a gentleman of the company said, ‘ Satan, if the drummer set thee to work, give three knocks and no more ; ’ which it did very distinctly, and stopped. The same gentleman then knocked to hear if it would answer him as it was accustomed to do. For further proof, he required it, if it actually were the drummer that employed him as the agent of his malice, to give five knocks and no more that night ; which it did, and quietly left the house for the remainder of the night.

This was done in the presence of Sir Thomas Chamberlaine of Oxfordshire, and many other creditable persons.

“On Saturday morning, an hour before daylight, January 10, a drum was heard beating upon the outside of Mr. Monpesson’s chamber, from whence it went to the other end of the house, where some gentlemen strangers lay, and commenced playing at their door four or five different tunes; and at length flew off in the air. The next night, a blacksmith in the village, and Mr. Monpesson’s man John, who was lying with him, heard a noise in the room, as if somebody were shoeing a horse; and something came with something like a pair of pincers, and nipped at the blacksmith’s nose the whole of the night

“Getting up one morning to go a journey, Mr. Monpesson heard a great noise below, where the children lay; and on running down instantly with a pistol in his hand, he heard a voice cry out, a witch! a witch! similar to one they had heard on a former occasion. On his entering the apartment, all became quiet again.

“The demon having one night played some little pranks at the foot of Mr. Monpesson’s bed, it went into another bed, where one of his daughters lay, and passed from one side to the other, lifting her up as it passed under her. At that time there were three kinds of noises in the bed. They attempted to thrust at it with a sword, but it continually evaded them. The following night it came panting like a dog out of breath, when some one present took a bedpost to strike at it; when it was immediately snatched out of her hand; and company coming up stairs at the same time, the room was filled with a nauseous stench, and very hot, although there was no fire on, and during a very sharp winter’s night. It continued panting an hour and a half, panting and scratching; and afterwards went into the adjoining chamber, where it began to knock a little, and seemed to rattle a chair: thus it continued for two or three nights in succession. The old lady’s bible after this was found again among the ashes, with the leayes downwards. It was taken up by Mr. Monpesson,

who observed that it lay open at the third chapter of St. Mark, where mention is made of the unclean spirits falling down before our Saviour, and of his giving power to the twelve Apostles to cast out devils, and of the Scribes' opinion, and that he cast them out through Beelzebub.

"The following morning ashes were scattered over the chamber floor, to see what impressions would be left upon it; in the morning, in one place they found the resemblance of a great claw, in another that of a smaller one, some letters in another which could not be decyphered, besides a number of circles and scratches in the ashes, which no one understood except the demon itself.

"About this time the author of the narration went to the house to enquire after the truth of the circumstances which made so much noise in that part of the country. The demon had left off drumming, and the terrible noises it was in the habit of making before he arrived; but most of the remarkable facts already related, were confirmed to him there by several of the neighbours, on whose veracity he could depend, who had witnessed them. It now used to haunt the children after they were gone to bed. On the night he was there, the children went to bed about 8 o'clock; a maid servant immediately came down and informed us that the spirit was come. The neighbours then present went away, as well as two ministers who had previously been some time in the house, but Mr. Monpesson the author, and another gentleman who came with him, went up to the room where the children were in bed. A scratching was heard as they went up stairs, and just as they got into the room, it was perceived just behind the bolster of the bed in which the children lay, and appeared to be lying against the tick. The noise it made was like that made with long nails upon the bolster. There were two little girls, about seven or eight years of age, in the bed. Their hands were outside the bedclothes, so that it was perfectly visible the noise was not made by them which was behind their heads: they had been so used to it of late, and always with some present in the chamber,

that they seemed to take very little notice of it. The narrator, who was standing at the head of the bed, thrust his hand behind the bolster from whence the noise proceeded, when it was immediately heard in another part of the bed; but as soon as his hand was taken away, it returned to the same place as before. On being told that it would imitate noises, he made trial by scratching several times upon the sheet, as five, seven, and ten times: it exactly replied to them by equal numbers. He looked under and behind the bed, grasped the bolster, sounded the wall, and made every possible search to find out any trick, contrivance, or other cause, as well as his friend, but could discover nothing. So that in truth he concluded, that the noise was made by some spirit or demon. After it had scratched about for half an hour or more, it got into the middle of the bed under the children, where it lay panting loudly, like a dog out of breath. The author then put his hand upon the place, and plainly felt the bed bearing up against it, as if it contained something within thrusting it up. He grasped the feather to feel if he could distinguish anything alive; then looked everywhere about to see if there were any dog or cat, or other creature in the room; every one present followed his example, but still they discovered nothing. The motion it caused by its panting was so violent, that it had a visible effect on the room and windows. In this manner it continued for half an hour, the time the author was present. During this panting, something was seen in a linen bag that was hung up against another bed, that was taken for a mouse or rat, but upon the closest examination of it, nothing was found in it of any description.

“The author and his friend afterwards slept in the very identical chamber where the principal disturbance had been first made. He was awakened by a terrible noise made on the outside of the chamber door. He awoke his friend, and asked three distinct times who was there, but received no answer. At last he exclaimed, ‘*in the name of God who is it, and what would you have?*’ To which

a voice answered, *nothing with you*. Thinking it was some of the servants of the house, they went to sleep again. Mentioning, however, the circumstance the next morning to Mr. Monpesson, he declared that no one of the house lay that way, or had any business thereabouts, and that none of his servants had got up until they were called by him some time after daylight. This the servants confirmed, and protested that the noise was not made by them. Previous to this, Mr. Monpesson had told us, that it would go away in the middle of the night, and return at different times about four o'clock, which was supposed to be about the hour it was heard by the author and his friend.

“Another circumstance connected with this seemingly mysterious business was, that the author’s servant coming up to him in the morning, told him, that one of his horses, the one which he had rode, was all in a sweat, and appeared in every other respect as if it had been out all night. His friend and he went down to the stable, and actually found him in the state he was represented to be. On inquiry how the horse had been treated, he was assured that the animal had been well fed, and taken care of as he used to be; his servant besides was extremely careful of his horses. ‘The horse,’ says the author, ‘I had had a good time, and never knew but he was very sound. But after I had rid him a mile or two very gently over a plain down from Mr. Monpesson’s house, he fell lame, and having made a hard shift to bring me home, died in two or three days, no one being able to imagine what he ailed. This, I confess, might be the consequence of an accident, or some unusual distemper, but all things put together, it seems very probable that it was somewhat else.’

“Mr. Monpesson then stated, that one morning a light appeared in the children’s chamber, and a voice was heard crying—a witch! a witch! for at least an hundred times together. At another time, seeing some wood move on the chimney of a room where he was, he fired a pistol among it; and on examining the place afterwards, several drops of blood were discovered on the hearth, and on se-



veral parts of the stairs. For two or three nights after the discharge of the pistol nothing was heard, but it returned, and so persecuted a little child newly taken from the nurse, that the poor infant was not suffered to rest either day or night; nor would the mischievous demon suffer a candle to burn in the room, but either ran up the chimney with them alight, or threw them under the bed. It so frightened this child by leaping upon it, that it continued in fits for several hours; and ultimately they were obliged to remove the children out of the house. Something was heard the next night, about the hour of midnight, coming up stairs; it knocked at Mr. Monpesson's door, but he not answering, it went up another pair of stairs to his man's chamber, and appeared to him at his bed foot. The exact shape and proportion of the demon he could not discover; all he saw was a great body, with two red and glaring eyes, which for some time were steadily fixed upon him; and at length they disappeared.

"On another occasion, in the presence of strangers, it purred in the children's bed like a cat, and lifted the children up so forcibly, that six men could not keep them down; upon which they removed the children to another bed, but no sooner were they laid here than this became more troubled than the first. In this manner it continued for four hours, and so unmercifully beat the poor children's legs against the posts, that they were obliged to sit up all night. It then emptied chamber-pots, and threw ashes into the beds, and placed a long iron pike in Mr. Monpesson's, and a knife into his mother's. It would fill porringers with ashes, throw every thing about, and kick up the Devil's diversion from morning till night, and from night till morning.

"About the beginning of April, 1663, a gentleman that lay in the house, had all his money turned black in his pockets; and one morning Mr. Monpesson going into his stable, found the horse he was accustomed to ride upon, lying on the ground with one of its hind legs in its mouth, and fastened there in such a manner, that several men



with a leaver, had the greatest difficulty in getting it out. After this there were a number of other remarkable things occurred, but the author's account extends no farther; with the exception that Mr. Monpesson wrote him word, that the house was afterwards, for several nights, beset with seven or eight beings in the shape of men, who, as soon as a gun was discharged, would scud away into an adjoining arbour.

"The drummer, however, it appears, was apprehended in consequence of these strange and mysterious occurrences. He was first, it seems, committed to Gloucester jail for stealing, where a Wiltshire man, going to see him, the drummer enquired the news in Wiltshire: the reply was, none: 'No,' returned he, 'do you not hear of the drumming at a gentleman's house at Tedworth?' 'That I do,' said the other, 'enough:' 'I,' quoth the drummer, 'I have plagued him (or something to that purpose) and he never shall be quiet until he has made me satisfaction for taking away my drum.' Upon information made to this effect, the drummer was tried for a wizard at Sarum, and all the main circumstances here related being sworn to at the assizes, by the minister of the parish, and several others of the most intelligent and substantial inhabitants, who had been eye and ear witnesses of them, from time to time, for many years past; the drummer was sentenced to transportation, and accordingly sent away; and as the story runs, 'tis said, that by raising storms, and terrifying the seamen, he contrived, some how or other, to get back again. And what is still as remarkable, is, that during his restraint and absence, Mr. Monpesson's house remained undisturbed; but as soon as the demon of his quiet returned, he fell to his old tricks again as bad as ever.

"The drummer had been a soldier under Cromwell, and used to talk much of 'gallant books' which he had of an old fellow, who was counted a wizard.

"On the authority of Mr. Glanvil, who had it from Mr Monpesson, we have the following story.

"The gentleman, Mr Hill, who was with me, being in

company with one Compton of Somersetshire, who practised physic, and pretends to strange matters, related to him this story of Mr. Monpesson's disturbance. The physician told him, he was sure it was nothing but a rendezvous of witches, and that for an hundred pounds he would undertake to rid the house of all disturbance. In pursuit of this discourse, he talkt of many high things, and having drawn my friend into another room, apart from the rest of the company, said, he would make him sensible that he could do something more than ordinary, and asked him who he desired to see; Mr. Hill had no great confidence in his talk, but yet being earnestly pressed to name some one, he said he desired to see no one so much as his wife, who was then many miles distant from them at her home. Upon this, Compton took up a looking-glass that was in the room, and setting it down again, bid my friend look into it, which he did, and then, as he most solemnly and seriously professeth, he saw the exact image of his wife, in that habit which she then wore, and working at her needle in such a part of the room, there also represented, in which and about which time she really was, as he found upon enquiring upon his return home. The gentleman himself averred this to me, and he is a sober, intelligent, and credible person. Compton had no knowledge of him before, and was an utter stranger to the person of his wife. The same man is again alluded to, in the story of the Witchcrafts of Elizabeth Styles, whom he discovered to be a witch, by foretelling her coming into a house, and going out again without speaking. He was by all accounted a very odd person.'"

Such is the account that has been handed down to us of the drumming demon of Tedworth, and that it was generally believed in at the time the occurrence took place, there cannot be a doubt, for at that period the minds of men were so warped with superstitious imaginings, that any thing which wore the impress of the marvellous was sure to find ready credence in the breast of that most gullable of animals—unreflecting man. Dark,

however, as the age was, when such fooleries were believed in, there were some men whose clearer conceptions enabled them to see through the wickedness of the laws which consigned unfortunate beings to tortures and to death, merely because they, in their ignorance, happened to imprecate vengeance on their neighbours, for some real or imaginary offence which their helplessness, or their poverty deprived them of avenging in a more effectual manner. To prove the truth of this assertion, we refer our readers to a work of Wm. Turner, M. A., which was published in London, in the year 1697. Turner was vicar of Walberton in Sussex, and was, moreover, a firm believer in charms, spells, amulets, and witchcraft; yet he gives a place in his huge folio volume, to the following story, in reference to the demon of Tedworth:—"The story of the haunting of Mr Monpesson's house, in Wiltshire, is famous, and printed in part by Mr. Joseph Glanvil. Mr. Monpesson is yet living, no melancholy or conceited man; the truth not doubted of by his neighbours. Within this month I spake with one of them, an attorney, who said, that the noises heard, the visible moving about of the boards before their faces, and such like, were all undoubtedly true; and the thing unquestioned by Mr. Monpesson (who, to his great cost and trouble, was long molested by it,) and his neighbours, and those that purposely went thither to see it. Notwithstanding, *that when some unbelievers went from London to be satisfied, nothing was done when they were there; for as God oweth not such remedies to unbelievers, so Satan hath no desire to cure them.*" Here we find that when an *unbeliever* visited the house of Mr. Monpesson, his ears were never regaled with the melodious rattlings of a drum. No, no; such sweet music was reserved for the ears of the initiated—for those whose distorted fancies could portray a ghost on a bed curtain—see a witch in a bent old woman, or hear a presage of death, or the beating of a drum, in the tickings which proceed from rotten timber. The intelligent of the present day may smile at the weakness of our fathers,

but if they look around them with an inquiring eye, they will find that many of the superstitions of the "olden time" still linger among us. A belief in Witchcraft still exists in the minds of many, whose means of information should place them above such a belief, and the attention that is still paid to what are called *omens*, proves to a demonstration that philosophy has yet much to do, ere the minds of men shall be entirely freed from the taint which was widely diffused over the earth, little more than a century ago.

Those who have gone along with us thus far in our little work, will have observed that not only in Scotland, but also in England and France, a belief in demonology pervaded the minds of the learned and unlearned, of the rich and the poor; the victims of the iron-hearted monster, superstition, being generally drawn from the latter class. Let us now take a glance at America, and we shall see that the seed which had been sown in the minds of emigrants to that country, shot forth its poisonous effluvia in such profusion, that fears were entertained that the state of New England would be depopulated. If we except Sweden, no state in Europe ever presented such frightful scenes of bigotry and fanaticism, as did that unhappy colony, about the close of the seventeenth century. Mr. Cotton Mather wrote an account of the whole proceedings, and published it by the special command of the governor of the province, an extract of which we now lay before our readers:—

"We have now," saith he, "with horror, seen the discovery of a great witchcraft! An army of devils is horribly broken in upon the place which is the centre, and after a sort, the first-born of our English settlements: and the houses of the good people there, are filled with the doleful shrieks of their children and servants, tormented by invisible hands, with tortures altogether preternatural. After the mischiefs there endeavoured, and since in part conquered, the terrible plague of evil angels hath made its progress into some other places, where other persons have in like manner been diabolically handled.

"These our poor afflicted neighbours, quickly after they become infected and infested with these demons, arrive to a capacity of discerning those which they conceive the shapes of their troubles; and notwithstanding the great and just suspicion, that the demons might impose the shape of innocent persons in their spectral exhibitions of the sufferers, (which may, perhaps, prove no small part of the witch-plot in the issue) yet many of the persons thus represented, being examined, several of them have been convicted of a very damnable witchcraft: yea, more than one, twenty have confessed, that they have signed unto a book which the Devil shewed them, and engaged in his hellish design of bewitching and ruining our lands.

"We know not, at least I know not, how far the delusions of Satan may be interwoven into some circumstances of the confessions; but one would think all the rules of understanding human affairs, are at an end, if after so many most voluntary, harmonious confessions, made by intelligent persons of all ages, in sundry towns, at several times, we must not believe the main strokes wherein those confessions agree; especially when we have a thousand preternatural things every day before our eyes, wherein the confessors do acknowledge their concernment, and give demonstration of their being so concerned. If the devils now can strike the minds of men with any poisons of so fine a composition and operation, that scores of innocent people shall unite in the confessions of a crime, which we see actually committed, it is a thing prodigious, beyond the wonders of the former ages, and it threatens no less than a sort of a dissolution upon the world.

"Now, by these confessions 'tis agreed, that the Devil has made a dreadful knot of witches in the country, and by the help of witches has dreadfully increased the knot: that these witches have driven a trade of commissioning their confederate spirits, to do all sorts of mischiefs to the neighbours. Whereupon there have ensued such mischievous consequence upon the bodies and estates of

the neighbourhood, as could not otherwise be accounted for."

Mr. Mather relates five trials which took place in that country, but for brevity's sake we will only insert one of them:—

"The tryal of Susanua Martin, at the court of Oyer and Terminer, held at Salem, June 29, 1692.

"I. Susanna Martin, pleading, Not Guilty, to the Indictment of Witchcraft, brought in against her, there were produced the evidences of many persons very sensibly and grievously bewitched, who all complained of the prisoner at the bar, as the person whom they believed the cause of their miseries. And now, as well as in the other trials, there was an extraordinary endeavour by Witchcrafts, with cruel and frequent fits, to hinder the poor sufferers from giving in their complaints, which the court was forced with much patience to obtain, by much waiting and watching for it.

"II. There was now also an account given of what passed at her first examination before the magistrates. The cast of her eye then striking the afflicted people to the ground, whether they saw that cast or no. There were these, among other passages, between the magistrates and the examinee.

"*Magistrate.* Pray what ails these people?

"*Martin.* I don't know.

"*Mag.* But what do you think ails them?

"*Mar.* I don't desire to spend my judgment upon it.

"*Mag.* Don't you think they are bewitch'd?

"*Mar.* No, I do not think they are.

"*Mag.* Tell us your thoughts about them then.

"*Mar.* No, my thoughts are my own, when they are in; but when they are out, they are another's. Their master—

"*Mag.* Their master: Who do you think is their master?

"*Mar.* If they be dealing in the black art, you may know as well as I.



*Mag.* Well, what have you done towards this ?

*Mar.* Nothing at all.

*Mag.* Why 'tis you, or your appearance.

*Mar.* I cannot help it.

*Mag.* Is it not your master ? How comes your appearance to hurt these ?

*Mar.* How do I know ? He that appeared in the shape of Samuel, a glorified saint, may appear in any one's shape.

"It was then also noted in her, as in others like her, that if the afflicted went to approach her, they were flung down to the ground. And when she was asked the reason of it, she said, I cannot tell ; it may be, the Devil bears me more malice than another.

III. The Court accounted themselves alarm'd by these things, to enquire further into the conversation of the prisoner, and see what there might occur, to render these accusations further credible : whereupon John Allen, of Salisbury, testified, That he refusing, because of the weakness of his oxen, to cart some staves, at the request of this Martin, she was displeased at it, and said, it had been as good that he had ; for his oxen should never do him much more service. Whereupon this deponent said, Dost thou threaten me, thou old Witch ? I'll throw thee into the brook. Which to avoid, she flew over the bridge, and escaped. But as he was going home, one of his oxen tired, so that he was forced to unyoke him, that he might get him home. He then put his oxen, with many more, upon Salisbury beach, where cattle did use to get flesh. In a few days, all the oxen upon the beach were found, by their tracts, to have run unto the mouth of Merimack river, and not returned ; but the next day they were found to have come ashore upon Plum Island. They that sought them, used all imaginable gentleness, but they would still run away with a violence, that seemed wholly diabolical, 'till they came near the mouth of Merimack river, when they ran right into the sea, swimming as far as they could be seen. One of them swam back again,

with a swiftness amazing to the beholders, who stood ready to receive him, and help up his tired carcase; but the beast ran furiously up into the island, and from thence through the marshes up into Newberry Town, and so up into the woods, and were after a while found near Amesbury; so that of fourteen good oxen, there was only this saved. The rest were all cast up, some in one place, and some in another, drowned.

“ IV. John Atkinson testified, That he exchanged a cow, with a son of Susanna Martin's, whereat she mutter'd, and was unwilling he should have it: going to receive this cow, tho' he ham-string'd her, and halter'd her, she, of a tame creature, grew so mad, that they could scarce get her along. She broke all the ropes that were fasten'd unto her; and tho' she were tied fast unto a tree, yet she made her escape, and gave them such further trouble, as they could ascribe to no cause but Witchcraft.

“ V. Bernard Peache testified, That being in bed, on the Lord's-day at night, he heard a scrabbling at the window, whereat he then saw Susanna Martin come in, and jump down upon the floor: she took hold of this deponent's feet, and drawing his body up into an heap, she lay upon him near two hours; in all which time he could neither speak nor stir. At length, when he could begin to move, he laid hold on her hand, and pulling it up to his mouth, he bit three of her fingers, as he judged, unto the bone: whereupon she went from the chamber, down the stairs, out at the door. This deponent thereupon called unto the people of the house, to advise them of what passed; and he himself did follow her. The people saw her not, but there being a bucket at the left-hand of the door, there was a drop of blood found upon it, and several more drops of blood upon the snow newly fallen abroad: there was likewise the print of her two feet just without the threshold; but no more sign of any footing further off.

“ At another time this deponent was desired by the prisoner, to come unto an husking of corn, at her house; and she said, if he did come, it were better that he did. He

did not; but the night following, Susanna Martin, as he judged, and another came towards him. One of them said, here he his: but he having a quarter staff, made a blow at them. The roof of the barn broke his blow; but following them to the window, he made another blow at them, and struck them down; yet they got up, and got out, and he saw no more of them.

“About this time, there was a rumour about the town, that Martin had a broken head; but the deponent could say nothing to that.

“The said Peache also testified, the bewitching the cattle to death, upon Martin's discontent.

“VI. Robert Downer testified, That this prisoner being some years ago prosecuted at Court for a Witch, he then said unto her, he believed she was a Witch: whereat she being dissatisfied, said, that some she-devil would shortly fetch him away. Which words were heard by others as well as himself.

“The night following, as he lay in his bed, there came in at the window, the likeness of a cat, which flew upon him, took fast hold of his throat, lay on him a considerable while, and almost killed him. At length he remembered what Susanna Martin had threatened the day before; and with much striving he cried out, Avoid, thou she-devil: In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, avoid. Whereupon it left him, leap'd on the floor, and flew out at the window.

“And there also came in several testimonies, that before ever Downer spoke a word of this accident, Susanna Martin and her family had related, how this Downer had been handled.

“VII. John Kembal testified, That Susanna Martin, upon a causeless disgust, had threatened him, about a certain cow of his, that she should never do him any good: and it came to pass accordingly: for soon after the cow was found stark dead on the dry ground, without any distemper to be discerned upon her. Upon which he was followed with a strange death upon more of his cattle,

whereof he lost, in one spring, to the value of £30. But the said John Kembal had a further testimony to give in against the prisoner, which was truly admirable.

“ Being desirous to furnish himself with a dog, he applied himself to buy one of this Martin, who had a bitch with whelps in her house; but she not letting him have his choice, he said, he would supply himself then at one Blezdel’s. Having mark’d a puppy, which he lik’d at Blezdel’s, he met George Martin, the husband of the prisoner, going by, who asked him, whether he would not have one of his wife’s puppies? and he answered, No. The same day, one Edmond Elliot being at Martin’s house, heard George Martin relate, where this Kembal had been, and what he had said: whereupon Susanna Martin replied, If I live, I’ll give him puppies enough. Within a few days after, this Kembal, coming out of the woods, there arose a little black cloud in the N.W., and Kembal immediately felt a force upon him, which made him not able to avoid running upon stumps of trees that were before him, albeit he had a plain cart-way before him; but tho’ he had his ax also on his shoulders to endanger him in his falls, he could not forbear going out of his way to tumble over them. When he came below the meeting-house, there appeared unto him a little thing like a puppy, of a darkish colour, and it shot backwards and forwards between his legs. He had the courage to use all possible endeavours of cutting it with his ax; but he could not hit it: the puppy gave a jump from him, and went, as to him it seemed, into the ground.

“ Going a little further, there appeared unto him a black puppy, somewhat bigger than the first, but as black as a coal. Its motions were quicker than those of his ax; it flew at his belly and away; then at his throat; so over his shoulders one way, and then over his shoulders another way: his heart now began to fail him, and he thought the dog would have tore his throat out: but he recovered himself, and call’d upon God in his distress, and naming the name of Jesus Christ, it vanished away at once.

“ The deponent spoke not one word of these accidents, for fear of affrighting his wife : but the next morning, Edmond Elliot going into Martin’s house, this woman asked him where Kembal was ? he replied, at home a bed, for ought he knew. She returned, they say he was frightened last night. Elliot asked, with what ? she answered, with puppies. Elliot asked, where she heard of it ? for he had heard nothing of it. She rejoined, about the town. Altho’ Kembal had mentioned the matter to no creature living.

“ VIII. William Brown testified, That Heaven having blessed him with a most pious and prudent wife, this wife of his, one day, met with Susanna Martin ; but when she approached just unto her, Martin vanished out of sight, and left her extremely affrighted.

“ After which time, the said Martin often appeared unto her, giving her no little trouble ; and when she did come, she was visited with birds, that sorely peck’d and prick’d her ; and sometimes a bunch, like a pullet’s egg, would rise in her throat ready to choak her, ’till she cry’d out, Witch, you shan’t choak me. While this good woman was in this extremity, the church appointed a day of prayer on her behalf ; whereupon her trouble ceased : she saw not Martin as formerly ; and the church, instead of their fast, gave thanks for her deliverance.

“ But a considerable while after, she being summon’d to give in some evidence at the court, against this Martin ; quickly thereupon, this Martin came behind her, while she was milking her cow, and said unto her, For thy defaming me at the court, I’ll make thee the miserablest creature in the world. Soon after which, she fell into a strange kind of distemper, and became horribly frantick, and uncapable of any reasonable actions ; the physicians declaring, that her distemper was preternatural, and that some evil spirit had certainly bewitched her ; and in that sad condition she now remained.

“ IX. Sarah Atkinson testified, That Susanna Martin came from Amesbury, to their house at Newbury, in an



extraordinary season, when it was not fit for any to travel. She came (as she said, to Atkinson) all that long way on foot: she brag'd, and shew'd how dry she was; nor could it be perceived that so much as the soles of her shoes were wet. Atkinson was amazed at it; and professed, that she should herself have been wet up to the knees, if she had then come so far: but Martin reply'd, she scorn'd to be drabbled. It was noted, that this testimony upon her tryal, cast her in a very singular confusion.

“X. John Pressy testifi'd, That being one evening very unaccountably bewildered, near a field of Martin's, and several times, as one under an enchantment, returning to the place he had left, at length he saw a marvellous light, about the bigness of an half-bushel, near two rod out of the way: he gave it near forty blows, and felt it a palpable substance; but going from it, his heels were struck up, and he was laid with his back on the ground, sliding, as he thought, into a pit; from whence he recover'd by taking hold on the bush; altho' afterwards he could find no such pit in the place. Having, after his recovery, gone five or six rod, he saw Susanna Martin standing on his left-hand, as the light had done before; but they changed no words with one another. He could scarce find his house in his return; but at length he got home extremely affrighted.

“The next day, it was, upon enquiry he understood, that Martin was in a miserable condition, by pains and hurts that were upon her.

“Is was further testified by this deponent, That after he had given in some evidence against Susanna Martin, many years ago, she gave him foul words about it; and said, he should never prosper more; particularly, that he should never have more than two cows; that tho' he was never so likely to have more, yet he should never have them. And that from that very day to this, namely, for twenty years together, he could never exceed that number; but that some strange thing or other still prevented his having any more.



"XI. Jervace Ring testified, That about seven years ago, he was sometimes grievously oppressed in the night, but saw not who troubled him; until at last, he lying perfectly awake, plainly saw Susanna Martin approach him. She came to him, and forceably bit him by the finger; so that the print of the bite, is now, so long after, to be seen upon him.

"XII. But besides all these evidences, there was a most wonderful account of one Joseph Ring, produced on this occasion.

"This man has been strangely carried about by demons, from one witch meeting to another, for near two years together; and for one quarter of this time, they have made him and kept him dumb, though he is now again able to speak.

"There was one T. H. who having, as 'tis judged, a design of engaging this Joseph Ring in a snare of devilism, contrived a while to bring this Ring two shillings in debt unto him.

"Afterwards this poor man would be visited with unknown shapes, and this T. H. sometimes among them, which would force him away with them unto unknown places, where he saw meetings, feastings, dancings; and after his return, wherein they hurried him along through the air, he gave demonstrations to the neighbours that he had indeed been so transported. When he was brought unto these hellish meetings, one of the first things they still did unto him, was to give him a knock on the back, whereupon he was ever as if bound with chains, uncapable of stirring out of the place till they should release him.

"He related, that there often came to him a man who presented him a book, whereto he would have him set his hand; promising to him, that he should then have even what he would; and presenting him with all the delectable things, persons, and places, that he could imagine. But he refusing to subscribe, the business would end with dreadful shapes, noises, and screeches, which almost scared him out of his wits. Once with the book there

was a pen offered him, and an ink-horn with liquor in it that seem'd like blood, but he never toucht it.

"This man did now affirm, that he saw the prisoner at several of those hellish rendezvouzes.

"This woman was one of the most impudent, scurrilous, wicked creatures in the world; and she did now throughout her whole tryal, discover herself to be such an one. Yet when she was asked what she had to say for herself, her chief plea was, that she had led a most virtuous life."

From the answer which this persecuted woman gave to her judge, we may infer that she, like many of those individuals who suffered for Witchcraft, was a woman of superior understanding to those among whom it was her lot to be cast. How pregnant with meaning is the expression she made use of to the person before whom she was tried!—"he that appeared in the shape of Samuel, a glorified saint, may appear in any one's shape"—and yet it was on account of those appearances that those called witches, were generally condemned. This same Mather from whom we have just quoted, this believer in ghosts and goblins, after defending the proceedings in New England, makes the following slip, or rather statement, which might have shown him the absurdity of his belief. "And it is observable of the persons called witches in New England, that the Devil doth often appear before them in the shape and representation of some good or creditable person whom they had no reason to suspect; as he did to Is-af Chacus, the Turk at London, the night before he was bapized, in the person of Mr Durie his instructor, to diswade and affright him from his purpose, as may be seen in the printed relation." That a man could write such a sentence as the one we have just quoted, and believe that the appearance of any individual to the imagination of any other individual, should subject the former to the imputation of Witchcraft, is one of those anomalies which strongly mark the aberrations of the human mind. In our intercourse with society it is no uncommon thing to meet with a person of the most acute

judgment in some things, who in others is singularly obtuse and dogmatical. It is difficult to eradicate early prejudices, and as Mr. Mather had been taught from his infancy to believe in all the absurdities of Witchcraft, his better judgment necessarily became subservient to the ridiculous opinions which were so generally believed in at the period when he wrote.

The following picture of witch persecutions, which occurred in Sweden, will show that that country was by no means behind the rest of Europe in its superstitions, and its cruelties. The relation is taken from the same author, and as the work is not in general circulation, many of our readers may not have had an opportunity of learning how the Swedes conducted witch matters. We therefore make another extract or two from Mr Cotton Mather.

“But is New-England,” continues our author, “the only christian country, that hath undergone such diabolical molestations? No, there are other good people that have in this way been harassed; but none in circumstances more like to ours, than the people of God in Sweedland. The story is a very famous one, and it comes to speak English by the acute pen of the Reverend Dr. Horneck. I shall only single out a few of the more memorable passages therein occurring; and where it agrees with what happened among ourselves, my reader shall understand, by my inserting a word of every such thing in black letter.

“It was in the year 1669, and 1670, that at Mobra in Sweedland, the devils by the help of witches committed a horrible outrage. Among other instances of hellish tyranny there exercised, one was, that hundreds of their children were usually in the night fetch’d from their lodgings, to a diabolical rendezvouz, at a place they called Blockula, where the monsters that so spirited them, tempted them all manner of ways to associate with them. Yea, such was the perilous growth of this witchcraft, that persons of quality began to send their children into other countries to avoid it.

“The inhabitants had earnestly sought God by prayer,

and yet their affliction continued. Whereupon judges had a special commission to find and root out the hellish crew; and the rather, because another country in the kingdom, which had been so molested, was delivered upon the execution of the witches.

“The news of this Witchcraft coming to the king’s ear, his Majesty was pleased to appoint commissioners, some of the clergy and some of the laity, to make a journey to the town aforesaid, and to examine the whole business; and accordingly the examination was ordered to be on the 13th of August, and the commissioners met on the 12th instant in the said village, at the person’s house to whom both the minister and several people of fashion complained with tears in their eyes, of the miserable condition they were in; and therefore begged of them to think of some way, whereby they might be delivered from that calamity.

“They gave the commissioners very strange instances of the Devil’s tyranny among them; how, by the help of witches, he had drawn some hundreds of children to him, and made them subject to his power; how he had been seen to go in a visible shape through the country, and appeared daily to the people; how he wrought upon the poorer sort, by presenting them with meat and drink, and this way allured them to himself; with other circumstances to be mentioned hereafter.

The inhabitants of the village added, with very great lamentations, That though their children had told all, and themselves sought God very earnestly by prayer, yet they were carried away by him: and therefore begged of the Lords Commissioners to root out this hellish crew, that they might regain their former rest and quietness; and the rather, because the children which used to be carried away in the country, or district of Elfdale, since some witches had been burnt there, remained unmolested.

“That day, *i. e.* the 13th of August, being the last humiliation day instituted by authority for removing of this judgment, the commissioners went to church, where there

appeared a considerable assembly both of young and old : the children could read most of them, and sing psalms, and so could the women, though not with any great zeal or fervour. There were preached two sermons that day, in which the miserable case of these people that suffered themselves to be deluded by the Devil was laid open ; and these sermons were at last concluded with very fervent prayer.

“The publick worship being over, all the people of the town were called together to the person’s house, near three thousand of them. Silence being commanded, the king’s commission was read publicly in the hearing of them all, and they were charged under very great penalties to conceal nothing of what they knew, and to say nothing but the truth ; those especially who were guilty, that the children might be delivered from the clutches of the Devil. They all promised obedience, the guilty feignedly, but the guiltless weeping and crying bitterly.

“On the 14th of August the commissioners met again, consulting how they might withstand this dangerous flood ; after long deliberation, an order also coming from his majesty, they did resolve to execute such as the matter of fact could be proved upon : examination being made, there were discovered no less than three score and ten in the village aforesaid, three and twenty of which freely confessing their crimes were condemned to die ; the rest, one pretending she was with child, and the other denying, and pleading not guilty, were sent to Fabluna, where most of them were afterwards executed.

“Fifteen children which likewise confessed that they were engaged in this witchery, died as the rest. Six and thirty of them between nine and sixteen years of age, who had been less guilty, were forced to run the gauntlet ; twenty more, who had no great inclination, yet had been seduced to those hellish enterprises, because they were very young, were condemned to be lashed with rods upon their hands for three Sundays together at the church door ; and the aforesaid six and thirty were also doomed



to be lashed this way once a week for a whole year together. The number of the seduced children was about three hundred.

On the 25th of August, execution was done upon the notoriously guilty, the day being bright and glorious, and the sun shining, and some thousands of people being present at the spectacle. The order and method observed in the examination was thus :

“1st, The commissioners and the neighbouring justices went to prayer; this done, the witches, who had most of them children with them, which they either had seduced, or attempted to seduce, from four years of age to sixteen, were set before them; some of the children complained lamentably of the misery and mischief they were forced sometime to suffer of the witches.

“The children being asked whether they were sure they were at any time carried away by the Devil; they all declared they were: begging of the commissioners that they might be freed from that intolerable slavery.

“Hereupon the witches themselves were asked, whether the confessions of these children were true, and admonished to confess the truth, that they might turn away from the Devil unto the living God. At first most of them did very stiffly, and without shedding the least tear deny it, though much against their will and inclination.

“After this, the children were examined every one by themselves, to see whether their confession did agree or no; and the commissioners found that all of them, except some very little ones, who could not tell all the circumstances, did punctually agree in the confession of particulars.

“In the mean while the commissioners that were of the clergy examined the witches, but could not bring them to any confession, all continuing steadfast in their denials, till at last some of them burst out into tears, and their confession agreed with what the children had said. And these expressed their abhorrency of the fact, and begged pardon; adding, that the Devil, whom they called



*Loyeta*, had stopped the mouths of some of them, and stopped the ears of others; and being now gone from them, they could no longer conceal it, for they now perceived his treachery.

"I am unwilling to leave this chapter, until I have represented the murderous nature of Satan, and displayed the Devil in his own colours. And this I will endeavour to do in a few instances, which shall be irrefragable, beyond all exception and confutation; as I think these before recorded are enough to make the atheist bite his nails, and our witch advocates scratch their heads, to find out an evasion, or scape-hole for themselves to shelter in."

Thus far Mr Cotton Mather on the Swedish cases of Witchcraft; he adds further on those that occurred in America.

"The truth of the matters of fact here related, is attested in the most authentic manner that is possible.

"The attestation runs thus:—The reverend and worthy author having at the direction of his Excellency the Governor so far obliged the public, as to give some account of the sufferings brought upon the country by Witchcraft, and of the trials which have passed upon several executed for the same; upon perusal thereof, we find the matters of fact and evidence truly reported; and a prospect given of the methods of conviction used in the proceedings of the court at Salem.

"WILLIAM STOUGHTON.

"SAMUEL SEWALL.

"Boston, October 11, 1692.

"The author tells us, there were in all nineteen witches executed, one whereof was a minister, and that two ministers more are accused. That there were a hundred witches more imprisoned which broke prison, and two hundred more accused; and that some men of great estates in Boston have been accused for the same crime. And lastly, that those hundred now in prison were accused

by fifty of themselves being witches, some of Boston, but most about Salem, and the towns adjacent.

"The court for the trial of the nineteen condemned and executed, was held at Salem, 1692.

"But among the rest one Martha Carrier was none of the least notorious among the wretches convicted for this black crime. For to omit other particulars, several of her own children confessed that they were witches, and that their mother had made them so; which confession they made with great shews of repentance, and much demonstration of truth, particularising place, time, occasion, journeys, meetings, and mischiefs done by them, &c., which were verified by other concurring testimonies and effects. But there was evidence enough against her besides theirs.

"One Foster who confessed herself also a witch, affirmed she had seen Martha Carrier at their witch meetings, and that it was she that had persuaded her to be a witch, adding this circumstance of proof, that as the Devil was one time carrying them both upon one pole to a witch meeting, the pole broke, and she catching hold about Martha Carrier's neck, they both fell to the ground, and she then received a hurt of the fall, of which she was not yet quite cured.

"Also one Lacy, another confessing witch, testified she had once seen Martha Carrier bodily present at a witch meeting in Salem village, and that she knew her to be a witch, and to have been at a diabolical sacrament, and that she had been the undoing of her and her children, by enticing them into the Devil's snare.

"Another confessing witch of the same name, affirmed likewise, that Martha Carrier was at a witch meeting in Salem, where they had bread and wine administered to them; and in the time of the said Martha's trial, one Susanna Sheldon had both her hands unaccountably tied together in open court with a wheel-band, so fast, that without cutting it could not be loosed; it was done by a spectre, and the sufferer affirmed it was that of the prisoner. In fine, the said Martha Carrier was the person of

whom the confessions of other witches, and of her own children among the rest agreed, that the Devil had promised her she should be Queen of Hell."

The next witch trial which we shall lay before our readers was conducted by that celebrated judge, Sir Matthew Hale. Few men have left a fairer character for integrity and discrimination than that eminent judge, and yet, in the case before us, we find him lending the influence of his great name to sanction the condemning of two human beings to death, who were arraigned for a crime which in the nature of things could not exist. No man, we are told, could be more cautious in condemning a witch, and yet in his charge to the jury, he acknowledges his belief in witches. How miserable must have been the people at that time, when the learned of the land believed in the existence of a crime which was incapable of demonstration!

The trial of Rose Cullender and Amy Duny, which we now quote, is extracted from Mr. Cotton Mather's "Wonders of the Invisible World."

"It may cast some light upon the dark things now in America, if we just give a glance upon the like things lately happening in Europe. We may see the Witchcrafts here most exactly resemble the Witchcrafts there; and we may learn what sort of Devils do trouble the world.

"The venerable Baxter very truly says, Judge Hale was a person, than whom no man was more backward to condemn a witch without full evidence.

"Now one of the latest printed accounts about a trial of witches, is of what was before him, and it ran on this wise.\* And it is here the rather mentioned, because it was a trial much considered by the judges of New England.

"I. Rose Cullender and Amy Duny, were severally indicted for bewitching Elizabeth Durent, Anne Durent, Jane Bocking, Susan Chandler, William Durent, Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy, and the evidences whereon they

were convicted, stood upon divers particular circumstances.

II. Anne Durent, Susan Chandler, and Elizabeth Pacy, when they came into the hall, to give instructions for the drawing the bills of indictment, they fell into strange and violent fits, so that they were unable to give in their depositions, not only then, but also during the whole assizes. William Durent being an infant, his mother swore, that Amy Duny looking after her child one day in her absence, did at her return confess, That she had given suck to the child, (tho' she were an old woman :) whereat, when Durent expressed her displeasure, Duny went away with discontents and menaces.

"The night after, the child fell into strange and sad fits, wherein it continued for divers weeks. One Dr. Jacob advised her to hang up the child's blanket in the chimney corner all day, and at night when she went to put the child into it, if she found any thing in it, then to throw it without fear into the fire. Accordingly at night, there fell a great toad out of the blanket, which ran up and down the hearth. A boy catch'd it, and held it in the fire with the tongs, where it made an horrible noise, and flash'd like to gunpowder, with a report like that of a pistol; whereupon the toad was no more to be seen. The next day a kinswoman of Duny's told the deponent, that her aunt was all grievously scorch'd with the fire: and the deponent going to her house, found her in such a condition. Duny told her, she might thank her for it; but she should live to see some of her children dead, and herself upon crutches. But after the burning of the toad this child recovered.

"This deponent further testified, That her daughter Elizabeth, being about the age of ten years, was taken in like manner as her first child was, and in her fits complain'd much of Amy Duny, and said, that she did appear to her, and afflict her in such a manner as the former. One day she found Amy Duny in her house, and thrusting her out of doors, Duny said, You need not be so angry, your

child won't live long: and within three days the child died. The deponent added, that she herself, not long after, was taken with such a lameness in both her legs, that she was forced to go upon crutches, and she was now in open court upon them.

"It was remarkable, that immediately upon the jury's bringing in Duny guilty, Durent was restored unto the use of her limbs, and went home without her crutches.

"III. As for Elizabeth and Deborah Pacy, one aged eleven years, the other nine; the elder being in court, was made utterly senseless, during all the time of the trial, or at least speechless; by the direction of the judge, Duny was privately brought to Elizabeth Pacy, and she touch'd her hand: whereupon the child, without so much as seeing her, suddenly leap'd up, and flew upon the prisoner; the younger was too ill to be brought into the assizes. But Samuel Pacy, their father, testified, that his daughter Deborah was taken with a sudden lameness; and upon the grumbling of Amy Duny, for being denied something, where this child was then sitting, the child was taken with an extreme pain in her stomach, like the pricking of pins, and shrieking at a dreadful manner, like a whelp, rather than a rational creature.

"The physicians could not conjecture the cause of the distemper; but Amy Duny being a woman of ill fame, and the child in fits crying out of Amy Duny, as affrighting her with the apparition of her person, the deponent suspected her, and procured her to be set in the stocks. While she was there, she said in the hearing of two witnesses, Mr. Pacy keeps a great stir about his child; but let him stay 'till he has done as much by his children, as I have done by mine. And being asked what she had done to her children, she answered, she had been fain to open her child's mouth with a tap, to give it victuals.

"The deponent added, That within two days the fits of his daughters were such, that they could not preserve either life or breath, without the help of a tap: and that

the children cry'd out of Amy Duny, and of Rose Cullender, as afflicting them with her apparition.

“IV. The fits of the children were various: they would sometimes be lame on oneside, sometimes on t'other. Sometimes very sore, sometimes restored unto their limbs, and then deaf, or blind, or dumb, for a long while together. Upon the recovery of their speech, they would cough extremely, and with much phlegm, they would bring up crooked pins, and at one time, a two-penny nail with a very broad head. Commonly at the end of every fit, they would cast up a pin. When the children read, they could not pronounce the name of Lord, or Jesus, or Christ; but would fall into fits, and say, Amy Duny says, I must not use that name. When they came to the name of Satan, or Devil, they would clap their fingers upon the book, crying out, This bites, but it makes me speak right well! The children in their fits would often cry out, There stands Amy Duny, or Rose Cullender: and they would afterwards relate, that these witches appearing before them, threatened them, that if they told of what they saw or heard, they would torment them more than ever they did before.

“V. Margaret Arnold, the sister to Mr Pacy, testified unto the like sufferings being upon the children, at her house, whether her brother had removed them. And that sometimes the children (only) would see things like mice run about the house; and one of them suddenly snap'd one with the tongs, and threw it into the fire, where it screeched out like a rat. At another time, a thing like a bee flew at the face of the younger child; the child fell into a fit, and at last vomited up a two-penny nail, with a broad head; affirming, that the bee brought this nail, and forced it into her mouth.

“The child would in like manner be assaulted with flies, which brought crooked pins unto her, and made her first swallow them, and then vomit them. She one day caught an invisible mouse, and throwing it into the fire, it flashed like to gunpowder. None besides the child saw



the mouse, but every one saw the flash. She also declared out of her fits, that in them Amy Duny much tempted her to destroy herself.

“VI. As for Anne Durent, her father testified, That upon a discontent of Rose Cullender, his daughter was taken with much illness in her stomach, and great and sore pains, like the pricking of pins, and then swooning fits; from which recovering, she declared, she had seen the apparition of Rose Cullender, threatening to torment her. She likewise vomited up divers pins. The maid was present at court; but when Cullender looked upon her, she fell into such fits, as made her utterly unable to declare anything.

Anne Baldwin deposed the same.

“VII. Jane Bockin, who was too weak to be at the assizes; but her mother testified, That her daughter having formerly been afflicted with swooning fits, and recovered of them, was now taken with a great pain in her stomach, and new swooning fits. That she took little food, but every day vomited crooked pins. In her first fits, she would extend her arms, and use postures as if she caught at something; and when her clutched hands were forced open, they would find several pins diversly crooked, unaccountably lodged there. She would also maintain a discourse with some that were invisibly present, when casting abroad her arms, she would often say, I will not have it; but at last say, Then I will have it: and closing her hand, which when they presently after opened, a lath nail was found in it: but her great complaints were, of being visited by the shapes of Amy Duny, and Rose Cullender.

“VIII. \* \* \* \* \*

The deponent further said, That her daughter being one day concerned at Rose Cullender's taking her by the hand, she fell very sick, and at night cry'd out, that Rose Cullender would come to bed unto her. Her fits grew violent, and in the intervals of them she declared, that she saw Rose Cullender in them, and once having a

great dog with her. She also vomited up crooked pins ; and when she was brought into court, she fell into fits. She recovered herself in some time, and was asked by the court, whether she was in a condition to take an oath, and give evidence ? She said she could : but having been sworn, she fell into her fits again ; and *burn her, burn her*, were all the words she could find power to speak. Her father likewise gave the same testimony with her mother, as to all but the search.

“ IX. Here was the summ of the evidence : which was not thought sufficient to convict the prisoners. For admitting the children were bewitched ; yet, said he, it can never be applied unto the prisoners, upon the imagination of the parties only afflicted : inasmuch as no person whatsoever could then be in safety.

“ Dr. Brown, a very learned person then present, gave his opinion, that these persons were bewitched. He added, that in Denmark there had been lately a great discovery of witches ; who used the very same way of afflicting people, by conveying pins and nails into them. His opinion was, that the Devil, in Witchcrafts, did work upon the bodies of men and women, upon a natural foundation ; and that he did extraordinarily afflict them, with such distempers as their bodies were most subject unto.

“ X. The experiment about the usefulness, yea, or lawfulness, whereof good men have sometimes disputed, was divers times made, that though the afflicted were utterly deprived of all sense in their fits, yet upon the touch of the accused, they would so screech out, and fly up, as not upon any other persons. And yet it was also found, that once upon the touch of an innocent person, the like effect followed : which put the whole court unto a stand ; altho’ a small reason was at length attempted to be given for it.

“ XI. However, to strengthen the credit of what had been already produced against the prisoners, one John Soam testified, That bringing home his hay in three carts, one of the carts wrenched the window of Rose Cullender’s house : whereupon she flew out, with violent threat-

enings against the deponent. The other two carts passed by twice, loaded, that day, afterwards ; but the cart which touched Cullender's house, was twice or thrice that day overturned. Having again loaded it, as they brought it through the gate which leads out of the field, the cart stuck so fast in the gate's head, that they could not possibly get it through, but were forced to cut down the post of the gate, to make the cart pass through ; altho' they could not perceive that the cart did of either side touch the gate-post. They afterwards did with much difficulty get it home to the yard ; but could not, for their lives, get the cart near the place where they should unload. They were fain to unload at a great distance ; and when they were tired, the noses of them that came to assist them, would burst forth a bleeding ; so they were fain to give over 'till next morning, and then they unloaded without any difficulty.

"XII. Robert Sherringham also testified, That the axle-tree of his cart, happening in passing, to break some part of Rose Cullender's house, in her anger at it, she vehemently threatened him, his horses should suffer for it. And within a short time all his four horses died ; after which he sustained many other losses in the sudden dying of his cattle. He was also taken with a lameness in his limbs ; and so vexed with lice of an extraordinary number and bigness, that no art could hinder the swarming of them, 'till he burnt up two suits of apparel.

"XIII. As for Amy Duny, 'twas testified by one Richard Spencer, that he heard her say, that the Devil would not let her rest, until she were revenged on the wife of Cornelius Sandswell. And that Sandswell testified, that her poultry died suddenly, upon Amy Duny's threatning of them : and that her husband's chimney fell, quickly after Duny had spoken of such a disaster. And a firkin of fish could not be kept from falling into the water, upon suspicious words of Duny's.

"XIV. The judge told the jury, they were to inquire now, first, whether these children were bewitched ? And,

secondly, whether the prisoners at the bar were guilty of it? He made no doubt, there were such creatures as witches: for the Scriptures affirmed it; and the wisdom of all nations had provided laws against such persons. He prayed the God of Heaven to direct their hearts in the mighty thing they had in hand: for to condemn the innocent, and let the guilty go free, were both an abomination to the Lord.

“The Jury in half an hour brought them in guilty upon the several indictments, which were nineteen in number.

“The next morning, the children, with their parents, came to the lodgings of the Lord Chief Justice, and were in as good health as ever in their lives; being restored within half an hour after the witches were convicted.

“The witches were executed and confessed nothing; which indeed will not be wondered by them, who consider and entertain the judgment of a judicious writer, that the unpardonable sin, is most usually committed by professors of the christian religion, falling into Witchcraft.”

Having taken a glance at a few of the many witch cases that lie before us, which occurred in different parts of Europe and America, let us now turn our attention for a little to the West Indies, where we will see that the difference of climate in these places is not more marked, than the difference between the accusations which were laid against their respective witches. In Europe, we are told, witches were content to assume the humble appearances of cats or hares; but in the West Indies, they appear to have known their trade better. Instead of the insignificant animals we have mentioned, and which any boy could chase, they, *it is written*, aye and printed too, transformed themselves at pleasure into the terrible appearance of the monarch of the forest, or, when it suited their caprice, into that of his scarcely less terrible rival, the tiger. Had they been as wise in Scotland, there cannot be a doubt, but that the witch-seeking king, who wore two crowns, would have been as much afraid to look on the

face of a witch, as history tells us he was to look on a sword.

The first of the West Indian cases which we shall lay before our readers, is that of Martha de Carillo ; it is extracted from Mr Gage's New Survey of the West Indies, by Dr. Burthogge, and inserted in his Essay upon Reason, at the 179th page. The priest who consigned her to a dungeon, admits that the poor old widow told him with tears in her eyes that she was wronged, and he further acknowledges, that her words and answers to him, were the words of a saintly and holy woman. We may reasonably infer that she was a woman of superior intelligence to her neighbours, and consequently had every chance of being reputed a witch. She had on a former occasion been accused of Witchcraft before some Spanish justices, but as no *sure* evidence was adduced against her she was acquitted. The regaining of her liberty, however, did not regain her good name, for "ance a witch and aye a witch" was the doctrine of the time, in which, unhappily, she was born. One thing which was urged against her by her neighbours, was the circumstance of a duck following her every time she went to church, and remaining at the door till she came out. If this proves anything, it proves that Martha had been kind to her duck ; the character she lay under would naturally prevent her neighbours from associating with her, and her affections would as naturally be strengthened towards the dumb creatures who shared her hovel, and partook of her food. Nor was the attachment of her duck towards her out of the ordinary course of natural occurrences. We have known a goose that had been reared among soldiers, that would follow no one but a soldier, and a goose is as proverbial for its stupidity among birds, as the ass is among quadrupeds,—“as stupid as a goose,” or “as stupid as an ass” being synonymous terms.

Martha, it seems, had been not only a religious but an industrious woman, for it was observed that she had always more money in her possession, than those in her station

generally have. This awakened the cupidity of the priest, who instantly began to gather whatever private information he could get against her; but while thus charitably employed, the very woman whose money had roused him to activity, came to church for the purpose of confessing her sins, and, as was customary, brought a present with her to her confessor;—to the very man who was hatching a secret plot which was to consign her to a dungeon, and to death. The present exceeded the priest's most sanguine expectations, yet he refused to administer the communion to her. The story itself will show what the old woman's feelings were, when she was denied what doubtless appeared to her the greatest boon on earth; but her tears fell on her confessor's soul, like dew on arid sand, which leaves no trace behind. Eager, however, to devour the fish which the old widow had added to her present, he hurried home and ordered them to be prepared for his dinner. On examination, the cook found them to be stale, and what could be more provoking to a hungry man than a present of stale fish? In his rage he threw them away, but it is well known that, in the West Indies, it is no uncommon thing to see putrid fish. The extreme heat of the climate compels the inhabitants who would eat their fish in season, to prepare them almost as soon as they are caught. Besides there are some kinds of fish in those regions that become putrid sooner than others, and as these are commonly the most delicate in flavour, it is more than probable that the good woman may have brought her confessor some of that species. To have given himself, therefore, as well as the fish fair play, he should instantly have left the church, and given orders for their speedy preparation. The same remarks might be applied to the honey and the eggs, but as for the rials, ah! Mr Priest, you say you did not know how many you had, only you *thought* you should have had four more. Doubtless the stinking fish was father to the thought, or, possibly, a lurking suspicion that there were more rials where the widow's four came from and that it would be more bene-



ficial to yourself and the church, that they should be transferred from her keeping to your pocket. With these remarks we submit the story to our readers in the words of the writer.

“In Pinola there were some who were much given to Witchcraft, and by the power of the Devil did act strange things; amongst the rest, there was an old woman, named Martha de Carillo, who had been by some of the town formerly accused for bewitching many; but the Spanish justices quitted her, finding no sure evidence against her: with this she grew worse and worse, and did much harm; when I was there, two or three died, withering away, declaring at their death, that this Carillo had killed them, and that they saw her often about their beds, threatening them with a frowning and angry look: the Indians for fear of her, durst not complain against her, nor meddle with her. Whereupon I sent (saith my author) unto Don Juan de Guzman, the lord of that town, that if he took not order with her, she would destroy the town.

“He hearing of it, got for me a commission from the bishop and another officer of the inquisition, to make diligent and private inquiry after her life and actions. Which I did, and found among the Indians many and grievous complaints against her, most of the town affirming, that she was certainly a most notorious witch; and that before her former accusation, she was wont to go as she had occasion about the town, with a duck following her; which when she came to the church, would stay at the door ’till she came out again, and then would return with her; which duck they imagined was her beloved devil, and familiar spirit; for that they had often set dogs at her, and they would not meddle with her, but rather run away from her. This duck never appeared more with her since she was formerly accused before the justice; which was thought to be her policy, that she might be no more suspected thereby.

“This old woman was a widow, and of the poorest of the town in outward shew, and yet she had always store

of money, which none could tell which way she might come by it.

“ Whilst I was thus taking privy information against her, (it being the time of Lent, when all the town came to confession) she, amongst the rest, came to church to confess her sins, and brought me the best present and offering of the town : for whereas a rial is common, she brought me four ; and besides a turkey, eggs, fish, and a little bottle of honey. She thought thereby to get with me a better opinion than I had of her from the whole town.

“ I accepted of her great offering, and heard her confession ; which was of nothing but trifles, which could scarcely be judged sinful actions. I examined her very close, of what was the common judgment of all the Indians, and especially of those who dying, had declared to myself, at their death, that she had bewitched them, and before their sickness had threatened them with death about their beds, none but they themselves seeing her ? To which she replied, weeping, that she was wronged.

“ I asked her, how she being a poor widow, without any sons to help her, without any means of livelihood, had so much money, as to give me more than the richest in the town ? How she came by that fish, turkey, and honey, having none of this of her own about her house ? To which she replied, that God loved her, and gave her all these things ; and that with her money she bought the rest. I asked her of whom ? She answered, that out of the town she had them.

“ I persuaded her to much repentance, and to forsake the Devil, and all fellowship with him : but her words and answers were of a saintly and holy woman ; and she earnestly desired me to give her the communion with the rest that were to receive it the next day : which I told her, I durst not do, using Christ’s words, “ give not the children’s bread unto dogs, nor cast pearls unto swine ;” and it would be a great scandal to give the communion unto her, who was suspected generally, and had been accused for a

witch. This she took very ill, telling me, that she had for many years received the communion, and now in her old age it grieved her to be deprived of it. Her tears were many; yet I could not be moved with them; but resolutely denied her the communion, and so dismissed her.

“ At noon, when I had done my work in the church, I bade my servants go to gather up the offerings, and gave order to have the fish dressed for my dinner, which she had brought; but no sooner was it carried into the kitchen, when the cook looking on it, found it full of maggots, and stinking; so that I was forced to hurle it away: with that I began to suspect my old witch, and went to look on her honey, and pouring it out into a dish, I found it full of worms; her eggs I could not know from others, there being near a hundred offered that day: but after as I used them, we found some rotten, some with dead chickens in them; the next morning the turkey was found dead; as for her four rials, I could not perceive whether she had bewitched them out of my pocket, for that I had put them with many other which that day had been given me, yet, as far as I could, I called to memory who, and what had been given me, and in my judgment and reckoning, I verily thought that I missed four rials; at night when my servants the Indians were gone to bed, I sate up late in my chamber, betaking myself to my books and study, for I was the next morning to make an exhortation to those that received the communion. After I had studied a while, it being between ten and eleven of the clock, on a sudden, the chief door in the hall (where in a lower room was my chamber, and the servants, and three other doors) flew open, and I heard one come in, and for a while walked about; then was another door opened, which went into a little room where my saddles were laid; with this I thought it might be the blackamore Miguel Dalva, who would often come late to my house to lodge there, especially since my fear of Montenegro, and I conjectured he was laying up his saddle, I called

to him by name twice or thrice from within my chamber, but no answer was made, but suddenly another door that opened to my garden flew open, wherewith I began within to fear, my joynts trembled, my hair stood on end, I would have called out to the servants, and my voice was as it were stopped with the sudden affrightments; I began to think of the witch, and put my trust in God against her, and encouraged myself and voice, calling out to the servants, and knocking with my cane at the door within that they might hear me, for I durst not open it and go out; with the noise that I made the servants awaked and came out to my chamber-door; then I opened it, and asked if they had not heard some body in the hall, and all the doors opened; they said they were asleep and heard nothing, only one boy said, he heard all, and related unto me the same that I had heard.

“I took my candle then in my hand, and went out with them into the hall to view the doors, and I found them all shut, as the servants said they had left them; then I perceived that the witch would have affrighted me, but had no power to do me any harm; I made two of the servants lie in my chamber, and went to bed; in the morning early I sent for my fiscal, the clerk of the church, and told him what had happened that night; he smiled upon me, and told me it was the widow Carillo, who had often played such tricks in the town with those that had offended her, and therefore he had the night before come unto me from her, desiring me to give her the communion, lest she should do me some hurt, which I denied unto him, as I had done unto herself: the clerk bade me be of good cheer, for he knew she had no power over me to do me any hurt.

“After the communion that day, some of the chief Indians came unto me and told me, that old Carillo had boasted that she would play me some trick or other, because I would not give her the communion. But I, to rid the town of such a limb of Satan, sent her to Guatamala with all the evidences and witnesses that I had found against

her, unto the president and bishop, who commanded her to be put in prison, where she died within three months.

The two following cases are taken from the same author, who relates the case of Martha de Carillo, and we doubt not our readers will agree with us, when we say that they partake fully as much of the marvellous, as any that we have yet narrated. That Gondalez was shot in the woods, that Gomez died from the effects of a severe beating, and that Lopez suffered for Witchcraft, we have no reason to doubt; but that they assumed the appearance of lions and tigers, is another story. Both cases are fully related in Dr. Burthogge's Essay on Reason.

“ One called John Gondalez (in the county aforesaid) was reported to change himself into the shape of a lion, and in that shape was shot in the nose by a poor harmless Spaniard, who chiefly got his living by going about the woods and mountains, and shooting of wild dear and other beasts to make money of them. He espied one day a lion, and having no other aim at him but his snout behind a tree, he shot at him, the lion run away; the same day this Gondalez was taken sick, I was sent for to hear his confession, I saw his face and nose all bruised, and asked how it came; he told me then, that he had fallen from a tree and almost killed himself, yet afterwards accused the poor Spaniard for shooting at him: the business was examined by a Spanish justice, my evidence was taken for what Gondalez told me of his fall from a tree; the Spaniard was put to his oath, who swore that he shot at a lion in a thick wood, where an Indian could scarce be thought to have any business. The tree was found out in the wood whereat the shot had been made, and was still marked with the shot and bullet; which Gondalez confessed to be the place; and was examined, how he neither fell, nor was seen by the Spaniard when he came to seek for the lion, thinking he had killed him; to which he answered, that he ran away lest the Spaniard should kill him indeed. But his answers seemed frivolous, the Spaniard's integrity being known; and the great suspicion

that was in the town of Gondalez his dealing with the Devil, cleared the Spaniard from that which was laid against him.

“The same author adds, that one John Gomez, the chiefest Indian of that town, of near fourscore years of age; the head and ruler of the principallest tribe among the Indians, whose advice and counsel was taken and preferred before all the rest; who seemed to be a very godly Indian, and very seldom missed morning and evening prayers in the church, and had bestowed great riches there. This Indian was very suddenly taken sick, (I being then in my other town of Mixco) the Mayor-domos, or stewards of the sodality of the virgin, fearing that he might die without confession, and they be chid for their negligence, at mid-night called me up at Mixco, desiring me presently to go and help John Gomez to die, whom also they said desired much to see me, and receive some comfort from me. I judging it to be a work of charity, though the time of the night were unseasonable, and the great rain might have stopped my charity, rid nine miles in the dark and wet; visited the sick Gomez, who lay with his face all muffled up, thanked me for my pains and care, confessed, wept, and shewed a willingness to die and to be with Christ; I comforted and prepared him for death: I went home streight to refresh myself, was presently called up again to give Gomez the extreame unction. As I anointed him on his nose, lips, hands, eyes, and feet, I perceived he was swelled, black and blue; I went home again; after a small nap, some Indians came to my door to buy candles to offer up for John Gomez his soul, whom they told me was departed, and that day to be buried solemnly at mass. I arose with drowsie eyes, went to church, found the grave preparing, met with two or three Spaniards, who told me of a great stir made in the town concerning Gomez his death: I, amused at this information, desired a true account of it. They told me that Gomez was the chief wizzard in the town, that he was often changed into a lion, and so walked about the moun-



tains ; that he was ever an enemy to Sebastian Lopez, an ancient Indian, and head of another tribe, and that both of them had two days before met in the mountain, Gomez in the shape of a lion, and Lopez of a tyger, that they fought cruelly, till Gomez the older and weaker was tired, much bit and bruised, and died of it : Lopez was then in prison, and the two tribes striving about it.

“ I mightily wondering at this, and resolving never more to believe an Indian, if Gomez had so much dissembled with me and deceived me ; went streight to the prison, where I found Lopez in fetters, called Anguazil Major, my great friend, and one of the officers of the town, and enquired of him the cause of his imprisonment ; he loath to tell me for fear of the Indians, at last, being pressed by me, and made to know that I had received some notice of it from the Spaniard before, at last told me the whole matter.

“ This struck me to the very heart, to think that I should live amongst such people, whom I saw were spending all they could get upon the church, saints, and in offerings, and yet were so privy to the counsels of Satan ; it grieved me that the word I preached did them no more good. — At last came twenty of the chiefest of the town, with the two majors, jurates, and all the officers of justice, desiring me to forbear that day the burying of John Gomez, for that they had resolved to call a crown officer to view his corps, and examine his death. I made as if I knew nothing, upon which they related all unto me, *viz.*, That there were witnesses in the town who saw a lion and a tyger fighting, and presently lost the sight of the beasts, and saw John Gomez and Sebastian Lopez parting one from another ; that immediately John Gomez came home much bruised, and upon his death-bed declared to some of his friends, that Sebastian Lopez had killed him ; whereupon they had him in safe custody : that they had never known much wickedness of those two chief heads of their tribes, and prayed me not to conceive the worse of all for a few. The crown officer came,

and found the body all bruised, scratched, bitten, and sore wounded. Lopez upon this was had to Guatemala and there hanged."

One short Transatlantic story more, and we have done with that quarter of the world, and we transcribe it for the purpose of showing that the Devil adopted a better line of policy, for furthering his interests with the inhabitants of the New World, than with those of the Old.

"While Mr. Eliot was preaching of Christ to the Indians, a demon appeared to a prince of the eastern Indians, in a shape that somewhat resembled the person of Mr Eliot, or of an English minister, pretending to be the Englishman's God. The spectre commanded him, to forbear the drinking of rum, to observe the sabbath-day, and to deal justly with his neighbours: all which had been inculcated in Mr Eliot's ministry; promising withal unto him, that if he did so, at his death he'd ascend unto a happy place; otherwise descend unto miseries. But the apparition, all the while, never said one word about Christ; which was the main subject of Mr Eliot's ministry. The Sachim received such an impression from the apparition, that he dealt justly with all men, except in the bloody tragedies and cruelties he afterwards committed on the English in our wars: he kept the sabbath-day like a fast, frequently attending in our congregations: he would not meddle with any rum, tho' usually his countrymen had rather die, than to deny themselves. At last and not long since, this demon appeared again unto the Pagan, requiring him to kill himself: and assuring him, that he should revive in a day or two, never to die any more. He thereupon divers times attempted it; but his friends very carefully prevented it: however, at length he found a fair opportunity for this foul business and hang'd himself; you may be sure, without his expected resurrection. But 'tis easie to see, saith my author, what a stumbling-block was here laid before the miserable Indians.—*Mather in Mr. Eliot's Life.*

## SECTION IV.

## CASE OF ANNE JEFFERIES.

WE shall now advert to a more pleasing case, which occurred in England, and though it can hardly be called a witch story, it is so mixed up with the superstitions of the times, that it is well entitled to a place among those who go under that denomination. Among the ideal beings which our fathers believed in, none bear so fair a character as the fairies. The essence of poetry is so mixed up with all that we have heard of them, that several of our most eminent modern poets have made use of them in working up the machinery of their more elaborate poems, and to this very day, in many parts of Scotland and Ireland, particularly in the latter, their existence is as firmly believed in, as in the days of Anne Jefferies; a sketch of whose life we now hasten to lay before our readers. The authorities we have quoted, and the interest they appear to have taken in her case, abundantly show how deeply rooted the belief in fairies was at the time to which we refer.

The following letter from Mr Moses Pitt, to William Turner, M.A. Vicar of Walberton, in Sussex, enclosing one that he had sent to the Right Reverend Father in God, contains the best account that we have yet met with of Anne Jefferies. Anne suffered imprisonment; but what else could a person expect in the seventeenth century, who could live without meat, and cure wounds and diseases without asking a fee? She might have been thankful she was not consumed in a fire.

“ Decem. 3. 1696,

“ Reverend Sir.

“ I have here sent you what I have published of Anne Jefferies; which you may, if you please, reprint in your collections, only with these additions, which accrued not

to my memory, or information, 'till after I had published the same, viz.:—that these fairies are distinguished into males and females; and then they are about the bigness of children of three or four years of age. I also desire you to insert this letter to me, from my kinsman, Mr Will. Tom, who was the person which dined with the Lord Bishop of Gloucester, when I told him this of Anne Jefferies; and is a merchant of as much note as most in Devon, or Cornwall, and has been mayor of Plymouth, who knows Anne Jefferies (who is still living) as well as myself, he sent me the letter, on my sending him one of the books by post, (I have the original by me.)

‘Plymouth, May 12, 1696.

‘Cousin Pitt,

‘I have yours, with the inclosed prints, and do know, and have heard, that all in it is very true: which, with my duty to my Lord Bishop of Gloucester, you may acquaint his Lordship, it's needless for me to write to him. I am, your affectionate kinsman and servant,

‘WILLIAM TOM.’

“This is all I think needful to acquaint you with on this subject. I am, your true and faithful servant,

“MOSES PITT.

“An account of one Anne Jefferies, now living in the County of Cornwall, who was fed for six months by a small sort of airy people, called fairies: and of the strange and wonderful cures she performed with salves and medicines she received from them, for which she never took one penny of her patients.

‘My Lord,

‘When about Christmas last I waited on you with my printed letter, to the author of a book, entituled, some Discourses upon Dr. Burnet (now Lord Bishop of Salisbury) and Dr. Tillotson (late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury) occasioned by the late funeral sermon of the

former upon the latter. After I had paid my duty and service to your lordship, you were pleased to mind me of my having told you of a wonderful story about seventeen or eighteen years since, in the company of a kinsman of mine, a tradesman of Plimouth; who also confirmed part of it from his own knowledge: and the following narrative you will find to contain the substance of what you then heard. And I doubt not, but I could bring several other persons, now living, to justify the truth of what I here write: nay the person concerned, who is at this time living in Cornwall, must own it, and a great deal more, if she could be prevailed with to speak out. My Lord, I thought I could, if any person alive, have prevail'd with her, she being the servant that attended me in my childhood; but your lordship may see that I cannot, and therefore your Lordship must be content with what I here publish: I am satisfied I was not, nor could be imposed on in this affair, the particulars having made so great an impression on me from my youth hitherto. I know, my Lord, that the great part of the world will not believe the passages here related, by reason of the strangeness of them; but I cannot help their unbelief: your lordship knows the record where it's mentioned, that the great God did marvellous things in the sight of our forefathers; but for all that they sinned yet more, and believed not his wondrous works: and therefore unbelief is no new sin crept into the world. And moreover, my Lord, if men would give themselves time to think, they cannot but remember that the great God has done as great and marvellous works in our age, both in judgment and in mercy, as he did in the days of old, by which the greatest atheist may be convinced, not only of the being of a God, but also that his power and his goodness are as manifest now as of old; and therefore it's the duty of all that do by personal knowledge know any extraordinary works or providences of God, which are uncommon, to publish them to the world, that the great God may be glorified, and mankind edified; which is purely

and surely the design of publishing the following narrative.

“ Anne Jefferies, (for that was her maiden name) of whom the following strange things are related, was born in the parish of St. Teath, in the county of Cornwall, in December 1626, and she is still living, 1696, being now in the seventieth year of her age; she is married to one William Warden, formerly hind (a hind is one that looks after the rest of the servants, the grounds, cattel, corn, &c., of his master) to the late eminent physician, Dr. Richard Lower, deceased; and now lives as hind to Sir Andrew Slanning, of Devon, Bart.

“ I must acquaint you, Sir, that I have made it my business, but could not prevail, to get a relation from her of what she herself remembers of those several strange passages of her life that I here relate, or of any other that I have either forgot, or that never came to my cognizance; but she being prevail'd with by some of her poor ignorant neighbours not to do it; and she fancying, that if she should do it, she might again fall into trouble about it: I here give your Lordship the best and faithfullest account I can.

“ In the year 1691, I wrote into Cornwall, to my sister Mary Martyn's son, an attorney, to go to the said Anne, and discourse her as from me, about the most material strange passages of her life: he answers my letter, Sept. 13, 1691, and saith, ‘ I have been with Anne Jefferies, and she can give me no particular account of her condition, it being so long since: my grandfather, and mother say, that she was in Bodmyn gaol three months, and lived six months without meat; and during her continuance in that condition, several eminent cures were performed by her, the particulars no one can now relate. My mother saw the fairies once, and heard one say, that they should give some meat to the child, that she might return to her parents. Which is the fullest relation can now be given.’

“ But I not being satisfied with this answer, did, in the year 1693, write into Cornwall to my sister's husband,



(Mr. Humph. Martyn) and desired him to go to Anne Jefferies, to see if he could perswade her to give me what account she could remember of the many and strange passages of her life. He answers my letter, Jan. 31, 1693, and saith, 'As for Anne Jefferies, I have been with her the greatest part of one day, and did read to her all that you wrote to me; but she would not own any thing of it, as concerning the fairies, neither of any of the cures she then did. I endeavoured to perswade her she might receive some benefit by it. She answered, that if her own father were now alive, she would not discover to him those things that did then happen to her. I ask'd her the reason, why she would not do it? She reply'd, that if she should discover it to you, that you would either make books or ballads of it: and she said, that she would not have her name spread about the country in books or ballads of such things, if she might have five hundred pounds for the doing of it: for she said, she had been questioned before justices, and at the sessions, and in prison, and also before the judges at the assizes; and she doth believe, that if she should discover such things now, she should be questioned again for it. As for the ancient inhabitants of St. Teath Church Town, there are none of them now alive, but Thomas Christopher, a blind man,' (Note, This Tho. Christopher was then a servant in my father's house, when these things happened) 'and he remembers many of the passages you wrote of her. And as for my wife, she then being so little, did not mind it; but has heard her father and mother relate most of the passages you wrote of her.'

"This is all I can at present possibly get from her, and therefore I now go on with my own relation of the wonderful cures, and other strange things she did, or hapned to her, which is the substance of what I wrote to my brother, and that he read to her.

"It's the custom in our county of Cornwall, for the most substantial people of each parish, to take apprentices the poor's children, and to breed them up 'till they attain to twenty-one years of age, and for their service to give

them meat, drink, and cloaths. 'This Anne Jefferies being a poor man's child of the parish, by providence, fell into our family, where she lived several years, being a girl of a bold daring spirit; she would venture at those difficulties and dangers that no boy would attempt.

"In the year 1645, (she then being nineteen years old) she being one day knitting in an arbour in our garden, there came over the garden-hedge to her (as she affirmed) six persons, of a small stature, all cloathed in green, which she called fairies: upon which she was so frightened, that she fell into a kind of a convulsion fit: but when we found her in this condition, we brought her into the house, and put her to bed, and took great care of her. As soon as she recovered out of her fit, she cries out, They are just gone out of the window; they are just gone out of the window: do you not see them?' And thus in the height of her sickness she would often cry out, and that with eagerness; which expressions we attributed to her distemper, supposing her light-headed. During the extremity of her sickness, my father's mother died, which was in April, 1646; but we durst not acquaint our maid Anne with it, for fear it might have increas'd her distemper, she being at that time so very sick, that she could not go, nor so much as stand on her feet; and also the extremity of her sickness, and the long continuance of her distemper, had almost perfectly mop'd her, so that she became even as a changeling: and as soon as she began to recover, and to get a little strength, she, in her going, would spread her legs as wide as she could, and so lay hold with her hands on tables, forms, chairs, stools, &c., till she had learn'd to go again: and if any thing vex'd her, she would fall into her fits, and continue in them a long time; so that we were afraid she would have died in one of them. As soon as she had got out of her fit, she would heartily call upon God: and then the first person she would ask for, was myself, and would not be satisfied 'till I came to her. Upon which she would ask me, if any one had vex'd or abus'd me, since she fell into her fit. Upon my telling

her, no one had, she would stroke me, and kiss me, calling me her dear child; and then all her vexation was over.

“As soon as she recovered a little strength, she constantly went to church to pay her devotions to our great and good God, and to hear his word read and preached. Her memory was so well restored to her, that she would repeat more of the sermons she heard than any other of our family. She took mighty delight in devotion, and in hearing the word of God read and preach’d, altho’ she herself could not read.

“The first manual operation, or cure she perform’d, was on my own mother; the occasion was as follows: one afternoon, in the harvest-time, all our family being in the fields at work, (and myself, a boy, at school) there was none in the house but my mother, and this Anne: my mother considering that bread might be wanting for the labourers, if care were not taken; and she having before caus’d some bushels of wheat to be sent to the mill, my mother was resolved that she herself would take a walk to the mill, (which was but a quarter of a mile from our house) to hasten the miller to bring home the meal, that so her maids, as soon as they came from the fields, might make and bake the bread; but in the mean time how to dispose of her maid Anne, was her great care, for she did not dare trust her in the house alone, for fear she might do herself some mischief by fire, or set the house on fire (for at that time she was so weak, that she could hardly help herself, and very silly withal): at last, by much perswasions, my mother prevail’d with her to walk in the gardens and orchards, ’till she came from the mill; to which she unwillingly consented. Then my mother lock’d the doors of the house, and walk’d to the mill; but as she was coming home in a very plain way, she slipt and hurt her leg, so that as she could not rise, there she lay for a considerable time in great pain, ’till a neighbour coming by on horseback, seeing my mother in this condition, lifted her up on his horse, and carried her home. As soon as she was brought within the doors of the house,

word of it was sent into the fields to the reapers, who immediately left their harvest-work, and came home; the house being presently full of people: a man-servant was ordered to take a horse, and ride for Mr. Lob, an eminent chyrurgeon, that then liv'd at a market-town called Bodmyn, which was eight miles from my father's house: but whilst the man was getting the horse ready, in comes our maid Anne, and tells my mother, she was heartily sorry for the mischance she had got in hurting of her leg, and that she did it at such a place (naming the place;) and further, she desir'd she might see her leg: my mother at first refused to shew her her leg; saying to her, what should she shew her leg to so poor and silly a creature as she was? for she could do her no good: but Anne being very importunate with my mother to see her leg, and my mother being unwilling to vex her by denying her, for fear of her falling into her fits, (for at all times we dealt gently, lovingly, and kindly with her, taking care by no means to cross or fret her) did yield to her request, and did shew her, her leg: upon which Anne took my mother's leg on her lap, and strok'd it with her hand; and then ask'd my mother, if she did not find ease by her stroking of it? My mother confess'd to her, she did. Upon this she desired my mother to forbear sending for the chyrurgeon, for she would, by the blessing of God, cure her leg: and to satisfie my mother of the truth of it, she again appeal'd to my mother, whether she did not find farther ease upon her continued stroking of the part affected; which my mother again acknowledged she did. Upon this my mother countermanded the messenger for the chyrurgeon.

“On this my mother demanded of her, how she came to the knowledge of her fall? She made answer, that half a dozen persons told her of it. That, reply'd my mother, could not be: for there was none came by at that time, but my neighbour ——— that brought me home. Anne answers again, that that was truth; and it was also true, that half a dozen persons told her so: for, said she,

you know I went out of the house into the gardens and orchards very unwillingly. And now I will tell you the truth of all matters and things that have befallen me.

“ You know that this my sickness and fits came very suddenly upon me, which brought me very low and weak, and have made me very simple. Now the cause of my sickness was this :

“ I was one day knitting of stockings in the arbour in the garden, and there came over the garden-hedge of a sudden, six small people, all in green cloaths; which put me into such a fright that was the cause of this my great sickness; and they continue their appearance to me, never less than two at a time, nor never more than eight: they always appear in even numbers, two, four, six, eight. When I said often in my sickness, they were just gone out of the window, it was really so; altho’ you thought me light-headed. At this time when I came out into the garden, they came to me, and ask’d me, if you had put me out of the house against my will? I told them, I was unwilling to come out of the house: upon this they said, you should not fare the better for it; and thereupon, in that place, and at that time, in a fair path-way you fell, and hurt your leg. I would not have you send for a chyrurgeon, nor trouble yourself: for I will cure your leg. The which she did in a little time.

“ This cure of my mother’s leg, and the stories she told of these fairies, made such a noise over all the county of Cornwall, as that it had the same effect St. Paul’s healing of Publius’s father of a fever, and a bloody-flux, at Malta, after his shipwreck there, as related Acts 28. 8, 9. *‘ And it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever, and of a bloody-flux: to whom Paul entered in, and prayed, and laid his hands on him, and healed him. So when this was done, others also which had diseases in the island, came, and were healed. That people of all distempers, sicknesses, sores, and ages, came not only so far off as the Lands-end, but also from Lon-*

don, and were cured by her. She took no moneys of them, nor any reward, that ever I knew or heard of; yet had she moneys at all times sufficient to supply her wants. She neither made nor bought any medicines, or salves, that ever I saw or heard of; yet wanted them not as she had occasion. She forsook eating our victuals, and was fed by these fairies from that harvest-time, to the next christmas-day; upon which day she came to our table and said, because it was that day, she would eat some roast-beef with us: the which she did, I myself being then at table.

“One time (I remember it perfectly well) I had a mind to speak with her, and not knowing better where to find her than in her chamber, I went thither, and fell a knocking very earnestly at her chamber-door with my foot, and calling to her earnestly, ‘Anne, Anne, open the door, and let me in.’ She answered me, ‘Have a little patience, and I will let you in immediately. Upon which I look’d through the key-hole of the door, and I saw her eating; and when she had done eating, she stood still by her bed-side as long as thanks to God might be given, and then she made a coursey (or bow) and opened the chamber-door, and gave me a piece of her bread, which I did eat, and I think it was the most delicious bread that ever I did eat either before or since.

“Another odd passage which I must relate was this; one Lord’s day my father with his family being at dinner in our hall, comes in one of our neighbours, whose name was Francis Heathman, and asked where Anne was; we told him she was in her chamber: upon this he goes into her chamber to see for her, and not seeing her, he calls her; she not answering, he feels up and down in the chamber for her; but not finding her, comes and tells us she was not in her chamber. As soon as he had said this, she comes out of her chamber to us, as we were sitting at table, and tells him, she was in her chamber, and saw him, and heard him call her, and see him feel up and down the chamber for her, and had almost felt her, but he could not see her, altho’



she saw him, notwithstanding she was at the same time at the table in her chamber eating her dinner.

“One day these fairies gave my sister Mary (the now wife of Mr. Humph. Martyn) then about four years of age, a silver cup that held about a quart, bidding her give it my mother, and she did bring it my mother; but my mother would not accept of it, but bid her carry it to them again, which she did: I presume this was the time my sister owns she saw the fairies. I confess to your lordship I never did see them: I had almost forgot to tell your lordship, that Anne would tell what people would come to her several days before they came, and from whence, and at what time they would come.

“I have seen Anne in the orchard dancing among the trees, and she told she was then dancing with the fairies.

“The great noise of the many strange cures Anne did, and also her living without eating our victuals, (she being fed, as she said, by these fairies) caus'd both the neighbour magistrates and ministers to resort to my father's house, and talk with her, and strictly examined her about the matters here related; and she gave them very rational answers to all those questions they then asked her (for by this time she was well recovered out of her sickness and fits, and her natural parts and understanding much improved) my father and all his family affirming the truth of all we saw. The ministers endeavoured to perswade her they were evil spirits that resorted to her, and that it was the delusion of the Devil (but how could that be, when she did no hurt, but good to all that came to her for cure of their distempers?) and advised her not to go to them when they call'd her. Upon these admonitions of the ministers and magistrates, our Anne was not a little troubled and concerned, not well knowing what to do in this case. However, that night, after the magistrates and ministers were gone, my father with his family sitting at a great fire in his hall, Anne being also present, she spake to my father, and saith, ‘Now they call,’ (meaning the fairies) we all of us urg'd her not to go. In less than half a quarter

of an hour she saith, ' Now they call a second time ;' we encouraged her again not to go to them. By and by she saith, ' Now they call a third time ;' upon which, away to her chamber she went to them, (of all these three calls of the fairies, none heard them but Anne). After she had been in her chamber some time, she came to us again with a bible in her hand, and tells us, that when she came to the fairies, they said to her, ' What, has there been some magistrates and ministers with you, and diswaded you from coming any more to us, saying we are evil spirits, and that it was all the delusion of the Devil ? Pray, desire them to read that place of Scripture in the first Epistle of St. John, chap. 4, ver. 1. '*Dearly beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God.*' &c. This place of Scripture was turn'd down to in the said bible. (I told your lordship before, Anne could not read.)

" After this, one John Tregeagle, Esq; (who was steward to the late John Earl of Radnor) being then a justice of peace in Cornwall, sent his warrant for Anne, and sent her to Bodmin gaol, and there kept her a long time. That day the constable came to execute his warrant, Anne milking the cows, the fairies appeared to her, and told her, that a constable would come that day with a warrant for to carry her before a justice of peace, and she would be sent to gaol. She ask'd them if she should hide herself; they answered her, ' No, she should fear nothing, but go with the constable.' So she went with the constable to the justice, and he sent her to Bodmin gaol, and ordered the prison-keeper that she should be kept without victuals; and she was so kept, and yet she lived, and that without complaining. When the sessions came, the justices of the peace sent their warrant to one Giles Bawden, a neighbour of ours who was then constable, for my mother and myself to appear before them at that sessions, to answer such questions as should be demanded of us about our poor maid Anne (Bodmin was eight miles from my father's.) When we came to the sessions, the first that was call'd in before

the justices was my mother (what questions they ask'd her I do not remember): when they had done examining her they desired her to withdraw. As soon as she came forth, I was brought in, and called to the upper end of the table to be examined; and there was (I suppose him to be) the clerk of the peace, with his pen ready in his hand to take my examination (I do not remember that they did put me to my oath.) The first question they ask'd me was, 'What have you got in your pockets?' I answered, 'Nothing, Sir, but my cuffs,' which I immediately pluck'd out of my pocket and shewed them. Their second question to me was, if I had any victuals in my pocket for my maid Anne? I answered, I had not; and so they dismiss'd me as well as my mother. But poor Anne lay in gaol for a considerable time after: and also Justice Tregeagle, who was her great persecutor, kept her in his house sometimes as a prisoner, and that without victuals. And at last when Anne was discharged out of prison, the justices made an order that Anne should not live any more with my father. Whereupon my father's only sister, Mrs. Frances Tom, a widow, near Padstow, took Anne into her family, and there she lived a considerable time, and did many great cures; but what they were, my kinsman, Mr. Will. Tom, who then lived in the house with his mother, can give your lordship the best account of any that I know living, except Anne herself. And from thence she went to live with her own brother, and in process of time married as aforesaid.

"And now, my Lord, if your lordship expects that I should give you an account when, and upon what occasion these fairies forsook our Anne, I must tell your lordship, I am ignorant in that; she herself can best tell, if she could be prevailed with so to do: and the history of it, and the rest of the passages of her life, would be very acceptable and useful to the most curious and inquisitive part of mankind.

"And now, my Lord, I think good here to put an end to my plain relation of these very strange passages of this

Anne Jefferies's life : it's only matter of fact which I have here faithfully related ; I have not made any observations nor reflections upon any one passage. I leave your lordship to your own free thoughts and judgment. I myself cannot give one natural reason for any one of these passages that happened to this poor woman, but must conclude with that great apostle and scholar St. Paul, Rom. 11. 33, 34, 35, 36. *‘ O the depths of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God ! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out ! For who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been his counsellor ? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again ? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever. ’* Amen.

“ I am, your lordship's most humble  
and dutiful servant,

“ May 1, 1696.

MOSES PITT.”

In selecting cases of witch persecutions, we have endeavoured, as much as lay in our power, to present our readers with those that formed the greatest contrast with one another, and if they generally ended in one and the same way, that is, in the death of the accused, still the manner of proceeding in the different countries we have adverted to, marks in striking colours how different were the customs of these countries at the time when burning for Witchcraft was common in the world. The Bargaran case, in Renfrewshire, is markedly different from the case of the drummer in England ; and the case of Susanna Martin, in America, forms a striking contrast to the cases that occurred in Sweden. As it is our intention to give an outline of the superstitions which prevailed, and which in some places still prevail in the West of Scotland, we shall, for the present, close our account of witch stories with a very brief outline of a few of the many instances of English cases which lie before us, and this shall wind up what we mean to adduce on this painful subject.

“In 1618, happened a very sad tragedy, in the family of the Right Honourable the Earl of Rutland, whose children were bewitched, and one murdered, by the devilish malice of Joan Flower, and her two daughters, Margaret and Philip, who dwelt near Belvoir castle in Rutland-shire, the residence of that noble earl, and where they were not only relieved, but entertained as cheerwomen. After which Margaret was admitted to live in the castle as a servant-maid, 'till at length the countess had information of some misdemeanours they were guilty of, having notice that the mother was a very malicious woman, and much given to swearing, cursing, and atheistical imprecations; and that of late days her countenance was strangely altered, her eyes fiery and hollow, her speech fierce and envious, and her whole demeanour strange and ridiculous, being much alone, and having divers other symptoms of a notorious witch: and her neighbours reported, she had familiar spirits, and terrified them all with her curses and threats of revenge, upon the least displeasure was done to her.

“She likewise heard, that her daughter Margaret often carried such great quantities of provision from the castle to her mother, as was unfit for a servant to purloyn, and at such unseasonable hours, that it was believed they could never maintain their extraordinary riot and expence, without robbing their lady, to maintain several debauched fellows, who frequented her mother's house, for the love of her youngest daughter Philip, who was likewise leudly transported with the love of one Thomas Symson; inso-much, as he was heard to say, she had bewitched him; for he had no power to leave her, though he found himself much altered, both in body and in mind, since he kept her company.

“Such discourses passed concerning them several years before they were apprehended or convicted, of which the earl and countess took little notice, by reason of their cunning observance, and modest carriage toward them: at length my lord had some suspicion of the mother, and



estranged himself from that familiarity and discourse which he used to have with her: for one Peak having wronged her, she complained to the earl, whom she found unwilling to encourage clamours, and malicious informations. And the countess discovering some incivilities in her daughter's life, and her neglect of business, discharged her for lying any more in the castle; yet gave her forty shillings, a bolster, and a bed, commanding her to go home. Upon this the mother being upbraided by her neighbours, and told, that her daughter was turned out of doors, she cursed all that were the cause of it, and studied to revenge herself upon that honourable family. The Devil perceiving the malicious temper of this wretch, and that she and her daughter were fit instruments to enlarge his kingdom, offered them his service, and that in such a manner as should no way terrifie them, nor could they be suspected to be concerned, appearing in the shape of a dog, cat, or rat; telling them, that if they would make a contract with him, they should have their will upon their enemies, and do them what damage they pleased. The thoughts of doing mischief to their ill-willers, easily induced them all to agree to his damnable proposals, and they consented to be his, body and soul, confirming their agreement with abominable kisses, and an odious sacrifice of blood, with certain charms and conjurations, wherewith the Devil deceived them. After this, these three women became devils incarnate, and grew proud in the power they had got to do mischief, by several spells and incantations; whereby they first killed what cattel they pleased: which so encouraged them, that they now threatened the earl and his family, who soon after fell sick with his countess, and were subject to strange and extraordinary convulsions, which they judging only to proceed from the hand of God, had not the least jealousy of any evil practice against them.

“ At last, as malice increased in them, so the earl's family felt the smart of their revenge: for Henry Lord Ross, his eldest son, fell sick of a very unusual disease,



and soon after died. His second son, the Lord Francis, was likewise miserably tortured by their wicked contrivances: and his daughter, the Lady Catherine, was oft in great danger of her life, by their barbarous dealings, with strange fits, &c.

“The honourable parents bore all these afflictions with christian magnanimity, little suspecting they proceeded from Witchcraft, till it pleased God to discover the villanous practices of these women, whom the Devil now left to fall into the hands of justice, for murdering the innocent, and to remain notorious examples of God’s judgment to future ages.

“They were apprehended about Christmas, in 1618, and after examination before divers justices of peace, who wondered at their audacious wickedness, were all three ordered to be carried to Lincoln jail. Joan Flower, the mother, it is said, called for bread and butter by the way, and wished it might never go through her, if she were guilty of that which was charged upon her; and so mumbling it in her mouth, she never spake a word more, but fell down and died with horrible torture, both of soul and body, before she got to the jail. The two daughters were examined before Sir William Pelham, and Mr. Butler, justices of peace, Feb. 4, 1618, where Philip, the youngest, made the following confession:

““That her mother and sister were very malicious against the Earl of Rutland, his countess, and their children, because Margaret was turned out of the lady’s service; whereupon her sister, by her mother’s order, brought from the castle, the right-hand glove of the Lord Henry Ross, who presently rubbed it on the back of her spirit, called Rutterkin; and then put into boyling water, after which she prickt it very often, and then buried it in the yard, wishing the Lord Ross might never thrive. And so her sister Margaret continued with her mother; and she often saw her imp Rutterkin leap on her shoulder, and suck her neck. She confest also, that she often heard her mother curse the earl, and his lady, and would

thereupon boyl blood and feathers together, using many devilish speeches, and strange gestures. She likewise acknowledged, that she herself had a spirit sucking her left breast, in the form of a white rat, which it had done for three or four years past; and that when it came first to her, she gave her soul to it; who promised to do her good, and to force Tho. Symson to love her, if she would suffer it to suck her: which she agreed to, and that it had sucked her two nights before.'

"Margaret, her sister, being examined, agreed in the confession that Philip had made, of their being malice to the earl, and about the young lord's glove; which, for other circumstances, for brevity's sake I here omit.

"About the same time, Joan Wilmot, of Goadby, a witch, was examined by Sir Henry Hastings, and Dr. Fleming, justices in Leicester-shire, about the murder of Henry Lord Ross; who declared, that Joan Flower told her, the Earl of Rutland had dealt badly by her, and had put away her daughter; and though she could not have her will of my lord himself, yet she had sped my lord's son, and had stricken him to the heart, &c.

"Another witch, called Ellen Green, of Stathorn, in Leicester-shire, was examined about that time by the same justices, who confessed, that Joan Wilmot, above-named, came to her about six years since, and persuaded her to forsake God, and betake herself to the Devil: to which she consented; who then called two spirits, one like a young cat, which she named Puss, and the other in the shape of a mole, which she called Hiff, Hiff; who instantly came, and Wilmot going away, left them with her, after which they leapt on her shoulder, the kitling sucking her neck under her right-ear, and the mole under her left, in the same place: after which she sent the kitling to a baker in the town, who had called her *witch*, and struck her, bidding it go and bewitch him to death. And the mole she sent to Anne Daws, of the same town, upon the same errand, because she had called her *witch*, whore, and jade; and within a fortnight after they both died. After which she

sent them to destroy two husbandmen, named Willison and Williman, who died both in ten days: these four she murdered while she dwelt at Waltham. When she removed to Stathorn, where she now dwelt, upon a difference between her and one Patchet's wife, a yeoman there, Joan Wilmot told her to go and touch Patchet's wife and child; which she did, touching the woman in bed, and the child in the midwife's arms, and then sent her spirits to bewitch them to death: the woman languished a month before she died; but the child lived only 'till next day after she had touched it: adding, that Joan Wilmot had a spirit sucking on her, like a little white dog; which she saw: and that she gave her soul to the Devil, to have these spirits at command, for any mischievous purpose, and suffered them to suck her constantly about the change and full-moon.

"One Anne Baker, a witch, was likewise apprehended and examined about the same time, who confessed before Sir George Mannors, and Dr. Fleming, justices of peace, that she had a spirit like a white dog, which she called a good spirit; and that one Peak, and one Dennis's wife of Belvoir told her, that the young Lord Henry was dead, and that his glove was buried in the ground, which as it wasted and rotted, in like manner did the lord's liver rot and waste likewise.

"Margaret, and Philip Flower, were arraigned at the assizes at Lincoln, before Sir Henry Hobart, and Sir Edward Bromley, judges, whereupon their confessing themselves actors in the destruction of Henry Lord Ross, with other damnable practices, they were condemned and executed at Lincoln, March 11. And the rest questionless suffered according to their deserts.

"*Anno Dom.* 1645. There was a notable discovery of several witches in Essex, and among others, one Elizabeth Clark was accused of this horrid crime, and informations taken against her before Sir Harbottle Grimstone, and Sir Thomas Bowes, justices of peace for that county. John Riset, of Mannintree, deposed, that about Christmas

his wife was taken sick and lame, with such violent fits, that he verily believed her distemper was more than natural; who thereupon went to one Hovey, at Hadly in Suffolk, who was reckoned a cunning woman: she told him, that his wife was cursed, or bewicht by two women, who were her near neighbours; and that she believed she was bewicht by Elizabeth Clark, alias Bedingfield, who lived near their house; and that her mother, and some of her kindred, had formerly suffered as witches and murtherers.

“ At the same time Matthew Hopkins of Mannintree, declared upon oath, that this suspected witch being ordered by the justices to be watched several nights, for discovering her wicked practices, he coming into the room where she was, with one Mr Sterne, intending not to stay, Elizabeth Clark said, if they would tarry a little, and do her no hurt, she would call one of her white imps, and play with it in her lap: but they told her, they would not allow it. After which, she in discourse confest, she had carnal converse with the Devil, six or seven years, who came to her bed three or four times a week, in the shape of a proper gentleman, with a lac'd band, and would say, ‘ Bessy, I must lie with you:’ which she never refused. About a quarter of an hour after this discourse there appeared an imp somewhat like a white dog, with red spots, and short legs, which soon vanish'd: she said his name was Jamara. Then another appeared like a greyhound, with long legs; which she called Vinegar Tom. She told them, the next would be a black imp, and should come for Mr. Sterne; which came accordingly and instantly was invisible. The last that appeared was like a poll-cat, but the head bigger.

“ She likewise confest, that she had five imps of her own, and two of the old beldam, Anne Wests; and that their imps sucked upon each other; and that Satan would never let her rest, 'till she consented to kill the cattle of Mr. Edwards of Mannintree, and the horse of one Robert Taylor.

“Matthew Hopkins likewise affirmed, that going from the house of this Mr. Edwards, to his own, about ten that night, with this greyhound, the dog suddenly gave a leap, and ran as if he had been in a full course after an hare; and he hastening to see what it was, spied a white thing like a young cat, and the greyhound standing aloof off, and that soon after the imp, or kitling, danced about the dog, and bit off a piece of flesh from his shoulder, which made him come crying to his master. He also declared, that coming that night into his own yard, he spied a black thing, in shape like a cat, thrice as big, sitting on a strawberry bed, and looking steadfastly on him; but going to it, it leaped towards him, as he thought, and ran quite through the yard, and the greyhound after it, to the great gate, which it threw wide open, and then vanished: the dog returned shaking and trembling exceedingly.

“Mr John Sterne confirms the aforesaid information, adding, that after five imps had appeared, Elizabeth Clark said, she had one more called Sack and Sugar; who had been hard at work, but would not be long ere he came; and then he should tear Mr. Sterne. And soon after she told him, that it was well he was so quick; otherwise her imp had soon skipped upon his face, and perhaps had got into his throat, and then there would have been a nest of toads in his belly: she said likewise, that she had one imp, for which she would fight up to the knees in blood, before she would lose it.

“Francis Mills, Grace Norman, Mary Philips, and Mary Parsly, who all watch'd with Elizabeth Clark, declared upon oath, that about twelve o'clock that night she smackt with her mouth, and beckoned with her hand, and instantly there appeared a white thing about the bigness of a cat. They also saw five imps more, whom she called by the names aforementioned, and told them, that the old beldam, Anne West, did by Witchcraft kill Robert Oakes, wife of Lamford, and a clothier's child, of Dedham, in Essex, both which died a week before. She added, that old West had the wife of William Cole, of

Mannintree, in handling; and she died accordingly of a pining and languishing disease.

“George Turner informed upon oath, that going to see Elizabeth Clark, after she was apprehended, and asking her, whether she had any hand in the drowning of one Thomas Turner his brother, who was cast away at sea, about two years and a half before? She answered, that the old beldam, West, raised that wind which sunk his hoy; and that she had no hand in it.

“Upon these, and other informations, and her confessions, Elizabeth Clark was arraigned, convicted, and executed at Chelmsford, March 27, 1645.”

## SECTION V.

### REMARKS ON THE PRECEDING CASES.

IN adverting to the preceding singular cases of Witchcraft, and taking into view the highly respectable character of the authorities quoted, the reader will have observed, that where the symptoms of disease were not evidently seen to exist, the knavery of interested and deep laid villany was at once apparent and undeniable. That the greater part of the circumstances connected with the case of Christian Shaw, of Bargarran, were the result of artifice and self-willed imposition seems very evident; nor can the credence given to these circumstances be otherwise accounted for, than by the gross ignorance and popular superstition of the times. That the unhappy girl might also be the victim of disease, is not only probable, but seems positively to have been the case. We are in possession of the facts of a similar case in that of a young lady of respectable connexions, who, were it not for the better intelligence of her parents, and the improved philosophy of the age,



would have carried her fantasies to a length as extravagant as that of Christian Shaw. She seems to have had an equal desire to impose upon the indulgence of her parents, and to deceive not only her physician, but all that were in attendance upon her, betraying all the anxiety, and exhibiting all the symptoms of hysteric temperament frequently to be met with in girls of her age, and which are now well known to the medical profession to arise from a constitutional state of the circulating fluids.

The mental excitement of patients of this description, is graphically expressed by the ingenious Burton, in his "Anatomy of Melancholy." "From hence," says this acute observer, "proceed a brutish kind of dotage, troublesome sleep, terrible dreams, a foolish kind of bashfulness in some, perverse conceits and opinions, dejection of mind, much discontent and preposterous judgment. They are apt to loathe, dislike, disdain, to be weary of every object, each thing almost is tedious to them. They take delight in doing nothing, for the time, but love to be alone and solitary, though that does them more harm. And thus they are affected, so long as this vapour lasteth; but by and by they are as merry as ever they were in their lives. They sing, discourse, and laugh in any good company, upon all occasions. And so by fits it takes them now and then, except the malady be inveterate, and then it is more frequent, vehement, and continue. Many of them cannot tell how to express themselves in words, how it holds them, what ails them. You cannot understand them, or well tell what to make of their sayings." Such we presume to have been the case with Christian Shaw, and likewise with the young lady to whom we have alluded.

But the question whether the case was one of imposture, or disease, or both, is of less consequence to this part of our inquiry, than the discovery of the cause that led to the callous and cold-blooded murder of the seven innocent individuals who fell a sacrifice, if not to political intrigue, or private malice, at least to a reckless and regardless estimate of human life.

If we turn our attention to the history of Europe at that important period, we find it exhibiting one common feature of rancorous animosity, and personal persecution,—the face of one nation turned against that of another, venting their fury in the horrors of war, and sacrificing to party feeling, with a desperate and frantic fury, everything belonging to the peaceful economy of life. This revelry of cruelty, oppression, and slavery, was kept alive by the incessant feuds of religious controversy, and the fires of the falling church of Rome were only extinguished to light those of presumptive prelacy.

We have already adverted, as far as the limits of our work would admit, to the causes that led to a belief in the existence of demons and witches, and though shortly, so far as it regarded that belief, traced its origin to the elementary constitution of the human mind. In the alleged cases of Witchcraft which we have cited, we see the malice and wickedness of individuals and sects, screened under the cloak of religion, persecuting, even to death, individuals, whose imbecility or old age rendered them an easy prey to their nefarious designs. “The church in danger” has ever been the warwhoop of intolerance and persecution, and heresy the scape-goat upon whose head were laid the sins of the people. In the times to which we allude, the fanatic zeal of the contending parties knew no bounds. The simplicity and purity of the religion of Jesus, was lost amidst the strife of controversy, and the precepts which he culled from the great volume of nature, were hidden in the mazy folds of sectarian creeds. First principles being lost sight of, the most absurd dogmas became the test of religion, and were maintained by their respective adherents with a tenacity as obdurate as it was impious. Men’s evil passions were thus kept in constant activity, and, like the powers of the body, gained strength by continued exercise. In this state of high excitement, the opposing parties looked upon each other with a vindictive hatred that could only be appeased by the sacrifice of human life. So early as the beginning of the

fifteenth century did bigotry and superstition seize upon the skilful and well informed, whom they supposed to derive their knowledge by compact with the great enemy of religion and mankind. Here was a fertile field opened for the display of religious zeal, and the clergy, taking advantage of popular feeling, opened the chase in full cry. Public fasts were proclaimed, royal commissions appointed, and the most worthless scoundrels, adopting witchfinding as a profession, were hired, and like bloodhounds let loose upon all whom ignorance or envy pointed out, as fit and proper objects for a sacrifice to falsehood and villany. No ebullition of phrensied excitement, no burst of popular indignation or deep-rooted revenge, could surpass in malignity and cold-hearted cruelty, the excruciating torture, and lingering deaths of the unhappy beings, whom the malice of the clergy, or the infuriated passions of the mob, selected as fitting victims to expiate crime, the committal of which reason and revelation equally prove to have been impossible. That such deeds of darkness could be committed without a special motive cannot for a moment be entertained. That that motive originated in the pride of religious and political supremacy, we are convinced, every one will acknowledge, who bestows a careful perusal on the cases we have cited. The frenzy and panic of excited masses of men may blaze for a moment, but reaction soon takes place, and settles itself down in fixed and imperturbable apathy; but the haughty bigotry of conventional learning, and the intrigues of political factions, have ever fortified themselves behind the bulwarks of established creeds, and appealed to the "wisdom of our fathers" as an infallible standard which knows no change, and admits of no improvement. As we have already said, it is to the contending interests of bigotry and political influence that we are to look for the principal causes that led to the bloody scenes and deeds of darkness, which, like a pestilence, brooded over the flux of centuries; these, united in "holy alliance," aided and abetted each other, equally ardent in pursuit of the game, and

equally envious of being "in at the death." In proof of this, we need only advert to the zeal of the clergy in discovering, and of the civil power in condemning the unfortunate individuals connected with the Bargarran case. Here we find the clergy in solemn convocation with their declared followers, invoking with prayer and fasting the Most High, to aid them in bringing to light and condign punishment, the instruments of a satanic power, whose energies were concentrated, for the purpose of torturing an unhappy and self-willed girl. Nor were these exertions confined to their sacred duty in the pulpit. The ministers of the neighbouring parishes united in keeping alternate "watch and ward" in the manor-house, and aided in seizing and detaining all persons, whom the girl, in her delirium, asserted to have appeared to her, in the shape of her tormentors. The infirm mendicant, the sturdy beggar, and the aged widow, were confronted with the infatuated girl, and on her bare assertion that such appeared to her in the list of her *invisible* tormentors, the unfortunate individual was immediately submitted to the torture, the ordeal of drowning, or the more infamous operations of the professional searcher for devil's marks, who, with the parish clergyman, were each paid a certain sum for the convictions that followed. By these means, the darkest passions of the human mind were brought to bear upon the interests of those, who, like the notorious Burke and Hare, found the means of gratifying their lower propensities, in proportion to the number of victims which their falsehood and depravity brought to the stake. In these bloody scenes, however, there now and then appear in the conduct of the persecutors, some faint glimmerings of repugnance at the horrid deeds. We have an instance of this, in the order of the commissioners appointed by royal authority, for the trial of the Bargarran witches, that the case should not be reported in the records of justiciary; had the case been fully reported, it would have exhibited, on the part of the persecutors, crimes of the deepest dye. Notwithstanding the precautions used to stifle inquiry,

and to hide from posterity the criminal enormity of the proceedings of the commission, the country around, where the events took place, is full of interesting anecdotes, connected with the bloody tragedy. These traditionary narratives are replete with affecting incidents, and declare, in distinct and forcible language, the innocence of the sufferers, and the cold-hearted treachery of those by whom they were persecuted. Although our limits prevent us from giving place, in the present work, to these details, we cannot omit giving the following, which we had from the mouth of an individual, nearly ninety years of age, who, in her infancy, had resided with her grandmother, to whom Margaret Lang was personally known. Most of the individuals who suffered on this occasion were of a character so obscure, that little can now be known of their history; Margaret Lang, is, however, an exception. Marked with information superior to the generality of mankind then, her name has descended with honour to her posterity, and is mentioned, even by her persecutors, with respect. Our informant, who still maintains that "Maggy" is a witch, says, that when residing with her grandmother, she often listened with deep interest to the stories about Margaret Lang and the awful burning. "Maggy," she said, "was aye thoct to be a forbyeous woman." Being, by profession, a midwife, and a constant attender on sacramental occasions, she was well known and esteemed in her own and neighbouring parishes. During the year in which she suffered, she had attended no less than nine of these occasions. Her own minister, the Rev. Mr. Turner, being appointed, according to custom, one of the commissioners of inquiry, and having a high respect for Margaret, sent John Henderson, one of his elders, to inform her of the probability of her arrest, and advise that she should absent herself for a few days, during the progress of the inquiry. The elder accordingly went to her place of residence, for the purpose of apprising her of the minister's advice, and consulting with her on the means of her present safety. In place, however, of entering into the immediate

object of his mission, he submitted to a narrative, on her part, of the greater portion of an action sermon she had been hearing, on a sacramental occasion, in a neighbouring parish. The elder, astonished at her powers of memory, and struck with the strength and richness of her observations, could not bring his mind to the conclusion, to advise her to abscond from her home, which, he doubted not, would be received by the vulgar, as an acknowledgment of her guilt, stamp her character with infamy, and brand the hated name of witch upon her for ever. The elder, unable in his own mind to reconcile the idea of so much good sense being prostituted to the service of sin and Satan, and carrying with him a strong conviction of her innocence, returned to the minister, whom he found anxiously waiting his arrival, and informed him of the subject of their conversation, and the opinion he entertained of her upright conduct, and innocence of the crime about to be laid to her charge. But the minister, aware of her danger, and of the diabolical disposition of her pursuers, insisted on the elder immediately returning again to Margaret, and to entreat of her, for the time being, to leave her home. The elder did accordingly, but her reply to him speaks peace of mind, and a conscious security, arising from the conviction of innocence. "Let them," said Margaret, "quake that dread, and fear that need, but I will not gang." She was consequently apprehended and put to the torture, which she endured with a fortitude becoming her consciousness of innocence, and worthy of a martyr to the sacred cause of truth. The following cutting sarcasm, to which she gave expression on the day of her execution, was received by her enemies as a tacit acknowledgment of her guilt, and held up by them as a confession sufficient to justify her execution. We quote this anecdote upon the same authority as the one just related.

On the morning of her execution, a farmer who formerly resided near to her, being in Paisley supplying his customers with milk, and being unwilling to witness the execu-



tion of one whom he highly esteemed, was pressing on his way home through the dense crowd that had collected to witness the execution. It happened, as he passed the jail that Margaret Lang was at that moment being brought out from the place of her confinement, to be conveyed to the place of the stake. The farmer caught her eye, when she called to him by name, and in allusion to her approaching death, cried to him, "that he would thrive now like a green bay-tree, as there would be no innocent blood shed that day." As we have said, this expression of bitter irony, was hailed by the assembled crowd, as a confession of her guilt, and an acknowledgment, on her part, of the justness of the sentence passed upon her.

This shows to what extent the public excitement was raised; nor does it reflect much credit on the civil authorities, who had recourse to such means to justify their deeds of blood.

That those who traded in what was called sorcery, for the purpose of deceiving their more ignorant, or credulous neighbours, deserved restraint and punishment, will be readily allowed; but that a whole people should for a moment credit the report, that any individual had the power of holding communication with the world of spirits, is the strongest proof that can be adduced against the intelligence of that people. It was only in the days of the grossest ignorance, that sorcery could be made profitable to its professors, and the contempt in which such an art is now held, marks in no mean degree the growing intelligence and rapid advance which the present age has made in the science of mind.

In the earlier ages, the punishment of death was occasionally inflicted on those who were convicted of sorcery, but religion or politics were generally the leading features in the accusation. A violated creed—an attempt to crush the power of a dominant priesthood—the loss of a battle, or the failure of an expedition, was often imputed to the mystic arts of the sorcerer.

The fancied omen-bird which Aristotle pointed out to

the soldiers of Alexander, when the battle of Arabella hung in the balance, and which inspired them with fresh ardour for the fight, is sufficient proof that the Greeks were keenly alive to superstitions, and in later times the burning of Joan of Arc for Witchcraft speaks volumes against the age and nation that so rewarded that illustrious and patriotic female. Still these are but solitary instances, when compared with the universal belief and wholesale butcheries which marked the dawning, and first and second centuries of the Reformation. In every country of Europe, at that period, eccentricity of character, if accompanied with age and helplessness, was sure to bring upon the head of its possessor the opprobrious epithet of witch or wizard, and the priests were ever ready to hand over to the strong arm of the law those on whom suspicion fell, or whom envy or malice had doomed to destruction. The film which obscured the eye of reason, hindered mankind from perceiving the grossness of the imposition, and discovering the frauds daily practised against them. Impressed with a deep sense of the power of the priesthood, the justness of their proceedings was seldom called in question, and the minds of the laity were raised or depressed by their influence, as interest dictated, or as passion swayed.

In no part of the world was the reign of this gloomy superstition so universal; no where did it enter so minutely into the every-day circumstances of life, as in our own country. However extravagant it may appear, yet there is not the shadow of doubt, that hundreds of individuals acknowledged its general principles, and gloried in them before the tribunal that judged them to the stake; witches gloried in the power, and wizards exulted in the energies of their supposed master. The blinded vulgar, in their fears, crouched beneath them, and by a proffered offering secured their protection or solicited their advice. The following relation, which we quote from Maxwell's Sports of the West, gives a lively instance of the influence of this belief, even in modern times.

“About forty years ago, a young seal was taken in

Clare Bay, and domesticated in the kitchen of a gentleman, whose house was situated on the sea shore. It grew apace, and became familiar with the servants, and attached to the house and family; its habits were innocent and gentle; it played with the children, came at its master's call, and, as the old man described it, was "fond as a dog, and playful as a kitten."

"Daily the seal went out to fish, and, after providing for his own wants, frequently brought in a salmon or a turbot to his master. His delight in summer was to bask in the sun, and in winter to lie before the fire; or, if permitted, creep into the large oven, which, at that time, formed the regular appendage of an Irish kitchen. For four years the seal had been thus domesticated, when, unfortunately, a disease called, in this country, the crippawn—a kind of paralytic affection of the limbs, which generally ends fatally—attacked some black cattle belonging to the master of the house; some died, others became infected, and the customary cure produced, by changing them to drier pasture, failed. A wise woman was consulted, and the hag assured the credulous owner, that the mortality among the cows was produced by his retaining an unclean beast about his habitation—the harmless and amusing seal. It must be made away with directly, or the crippawn would continue, and her charms be unequal to avert the malady. The superstitious wretch consented to the hag's proposal, and the seal was put aboard a boat—carried out to sea beyond Clare Island, and there committed to the deep, to manage for himself as he best could. The boat returned—the family retired to rest, and the next morning the servant awakened his master, to inform him that the seal was sleeping quietly in the oven. The poor animal, over night, came back to his loved home, crept through an open window, and took possession of his favourite resting-place. Next morning, another cow was reported to be unwell, and the seal must now be finally removed. A Galway fishing-boat was leaving Westport, on her return home, and the master undertook to carry off the seal, and

not to put him overboard, until he had gone leagues beyond Innis Baffin. It was done—a day and a night passed; the servant was raking the fire for the night; something scratched gently at the door—it was opened—and in came the seal! Wearied with his long and unusual voyage, he testified, by a peculiar cry, expressive of pleasure, his delight to find himself at home. Then stretching himself before the glowing embers of the hearth, he fell into a deep sleep.

“The master of the house was immediately apprised of this unexpected and unwelcome guest. In the exigency, the beldame was awakened and consulted; she averred that it was unlucky to kill a seal, but suggested that the animal should be deprived of sight, and in a short time carried to sea. To this horrid proposition the besotted wretch who owned the house consented; and the affectionate and confiding creature was cruelly deprived of sight on that hearth for which he had resigned his native element. Next morning, writhing in agony, the mutilated seal was embarked, taken outside Clare Island, and for the last time committed to the waves.

“A week passed over, and things became worse, instead of better. The cattle of the truculent wretch died fast, and the infernal hag gave him the pleasurable tidings that her arts were useless, and that the destructive visitation upon his cattle exceeded her skill to cure.

“On the eighth night after the seal had been devoted to the Atlantic, it blew tremendously. In the pauses of the storm, a wailing moan was at times faintly heard at the door. The servants, who slept in the kitchen, concluded that the *Banshee* came to forewarn them of an approaching death, and buried their heads in the bed-coverings. When morning broke, the door was opened, and the seal was there lying dead upon the threshold!”

The ignorant have ever been the dupes of the designing; and the indolent have always found the means of imposing themselves as a tax upon the industry of others. From this class have arisen the greater part of those who have

assumed the name of sorcerers and witches, and the numerous train of wise men and women, who, in every age and in every country, have obtained a living by addressing themselves to the superstitions and fears of the credulous. Nor is it only in civilized countries where the designing knave procures without labour the means of subsistence. The Angekok, or wise men of the Greenlanders are generally the very refuse of the people, either unskilful in the chase, or lazy. Yet, as reputed wise men who are connected with Yurngarsuk, (God) they possess the confidence of their countrymen, and often make use of it to ruin the innocent. On occasions of sickness or death, or of ill success in the chase, those who have met with the misfortune, ask them who may be the cause of it, or who has brought this evil upon them. Woe then to the old widow without a protector, or to the old man without grown up sons, against whom they have a secret ill-will, or whose property tempts them. They are capable of long concealing their hatred, even under the appearance of friendship; but they execute their vengeance in a cruel manner, when the measure of sin, according to their ideas, is full. They generally proceed in the following manner:—"The person accused and condemned, is called out of his house, or his tent, with a voice which announces to him he must die. He turns pale, but goes out notwithstanding, and his furious accusers now ask him the following questions, Are not you an Illkotsok? (a witch or sorcerer.) Did you not kill such a one by your words or malice? If the person condemned even answers, No! his death is still inevitable, but in his mortal anguish he sometimes answers, Yes; hereupon they stab him with their knives, cut him to pieces, and every one eats a piece of his heart, that his ghost may not return and frighten them."\*

It is strange that the indolent and the worthless should

thus be permitted to impose upon a rude people, who have the law of retaliation in their own hands, and whose revenge is deep-rooted and enduring. But the fearful and the superstitious have ever been, and ever will be, the slaves of oppression and power; nor have men been wanting, whose better understanding must have convinced them, that the pretended powers of these individuals were not only inconsistent with the universal laws of nature, but incompatible with the nature and attributes of an omnipotent and all-wise Ruler of the universe; yet, from interested motives, and prostitution of talents, have disgraced themselves by a base and servile connivance at the most flagrant wickedness that ever disgraced the history of man. With the exception of the Bargarran case, none in this country exhibited such open disregard to truth and justice, as that of the pusillanimous and weak-minded King James. In his case we find the darkest passions of the human mind brought into play, and a picture of depravity presented, the foulest and most frightful which it is possible for the mind to contemplate. Vain and self-conceited of his literary acquirements—pompous and pharisaical in his religious observances—jealous of the rivalry of the church of Rome, and timorous and fearful of injury to his royal person, he lived in a state of continual alarm, and started at the shadows which his own silly fancy had created. He looked upon the Pope and the Devil, with their subordinate accomplices, the witches, as his leagued and common enemies,—united in their endeavours to crush and destroy him. He consequently found himself bound, for the safety of his person and the protection of the church, of which he was the supreme head, to exercise all his learning and ingenuity in discovering, and all his sovereign power and authority in bringing to the torture all persons suspected, and to condign punishment all convicted of combining with Satan against the privileges of the church, or the dignity of the crown. To these causes we may trace the numerous executions of witches in Scotland, and the zeal and support of the clergy there, in aid-



ing in the discovery, and bringing to the stake the unhappy individuals, against whom ignorant and perjured witnesses, and a packed and threatened jury, united in bringing in a verdict of guilty, for a crime which had no existence.

It is painful to read the excruciating tortures by which King James extorted a confession from individuals maddened by pain, and driven to despair by protracted suffering, and for no other appreciable motive than that of flattering his inordinate vanity, and gratifying his unbounded self-esteem. For these purposes he made himself the main instrument of investigation, and saw with his own eyes the torture duly applied—for these purposes did he threaten the jury with an assize of error if they dared to be just, or even to be merciful—for these purposes did he arrogate to himself the applause of men and of angels, in braving the wrath, alarming the power, and striking terror into the whole kingdom of darkness, by the “protestant King of Scotland, and the heir of England,” offering his hand in wedlock to the protestant princess Anne of Denmark. This, in King James’ eyes, was a step worthy of rousing satanic power, and of calling in the Prince of the power of the air in *propria persona*, with his effective retinue of old wives and broomsticks—among whom would doubtless figure in the foremost rank, Doctor John Fian, the Tranent Schoolmaster, Barbara Napier *alias* Douglass, a witch of rank, Geillis Duncan, and the silly old ploughman, who was nicknamed Graymeal—as his satanic majesty’s chief supporters.

The monarch of Scotland, besides obtaining a singular triumph over the great enemy of mankind, seems to have been highly gratified by the confession of one of the witches, Agnes Sampson, the “wise wife of Keith,” who being tortured for an hour by the twisting of a cord round her head, acknowledged that, with one Richard Grahame, she had consulted the Devil respecting the means of shortening the life of the king, and had been answered by that personage in French, “*Il est homme de Dieu.*” This very flattering compliment, and indirect acknowledgment,

of the inability of the Devil to injure the life of the king, was received by him with the greatest satisfaction and self-complacency.

So highly was his majesty pleased with the torturings and examinations of the witches who had conspired to destroy him, that he amused himself and privy council during the greater part of the winter, extorting, by means of the *boots* and the *pilniewinks*, confessions of their deep carousals and midnight revels in the lone churchyard or in the dewy holm—dancing wild withershins beneath the moon, or sailing on the foamy sea in sieves, and the “big fiend rolling before them in mirthful frolic, huge and grim upon the swelling wave.” In his merrier moods he would command Giellis Duncan with her Jewish harp or trumpet to twang the stirring notes that in the churchyard of North-Berwick gratified the ear even of Satan, and induced the lymphatic Dr. Fian to lead the ring, and “trip it on the light fantastic toe.”

It was fooleries such as these that gave tone and vigour to the proceedings of the Scottish king. Presuming upon his hypocritical piety, his pedantic learning, his rude wit and self-conceited wisdom, he set no bounds to his vindictive cruelty, but tortured his supposed enemies with a malignant coolness and refined barbarity bordering upon an insanity acting under the influence of deep-rooted superstition and preternatural terror.

The same spirit that animated the king, gave also character and influence to the inferior courts. Ministers of the gospel and judges of the land were imbued with a superstitious zeal, that, setting the common principles of reason and evidence aside, listened only to the echo of its own fears, and calculated that its safety rested alone on the multitude of its victims. The less reflecting part of the community, following the example of their superiors, set little value upon human life, and beheld these cold-blooded butcheries with indifference, or rather with satisfaction and delight; and while the authorities finished a witch-burning with a feast, the populace enjoyed it as a pastime.

So frequent were these exhibitions that, during the first year of the reign of James, the infamous Hopkins, the witchfinder, brought no less than sixty individuals to the stake on his own conviction, and was himself at last executed as a wizard.

But these days of fanaticism and gloomy superstition are now past, and the torture, the ordeal, and the Devil's mark are with them forgotten. The fanatic is restrained in his frenzies by the voice of reason, and the superstitious allured from his path of terror by the lights of science. Deformity may be endowed with intelligence, and wisdom may be found in the grey hairs of age. Bigotry may learn a lesson in the experience of the past, and intolerance read its doom in the progress of knowledge. "Ignorance," we are told, "is the mother of devotion," but no devotion has been so injurious to the human race, or so unworthy of the Supreme Being, as that which leads to unreasonable fanaticism, or distrustful superstition. In the words of Judge Story, as given by him in an Essay read to the Essex Historical Society, in 1828, "Nothing" "has ever been found more vindictive and cruel than fanaticism acting under the influence of preternatural terror, and assuming to punish offences created by its own gloomy reveries. Under such circumstances it becomes itself the very demon whose agency it seeks to destroy. It loses sight of all the principles of reason and of evidence. It sees nothing around it but victims for sacrifice. It hears nothing but the voice of its own vengeance. It believes nothing but what is monstrous and incredible. It conjures up every phantom of superstition, and shapes it to the living form of its own passions and frenzies. In short, insanity could hardly devise more refinements in barbarity, or profligacy execute them with more malignant coolness. In the wretched butcheries of those times, (for so, in fact, they were,) in which law and reason were equally set at defiance, we have shocking instances of unnatural conduct. We find parents accusing their children, children their parents, and wives their husbands, of a crime

which must have brought them to the scaffold. We find innocent persons misled by the hope of pardon, or wrought up to frenzy by the pretended sufferings of others, freely accusing themselves of the same crime. We find gross perjury practised to procure condemnations, sometimes for self-protection, and sometimes from utter recklessness of consequences. We find even religion itself made an instrument of vengeance, stimulating the work of persecution, until at last, in its progress, its desolations reached the firesides even of the persecutors."

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## SECTION VI.

### SCOTTISH MYTHOLOGY.

IF the grosser superstitions have been banished from the towns and cities of Europe, they have still a strong hold on the minds of those who have little intercourse with the better informed classes of their fellow creatures. Even in our cities there still exists in the minds of many, a lurking belief in omens and supernatural visitings, and it is no uncommon thing to meet a person who has passed an unhappy day in consequence of an idle dream. The editors of this work are acquainted with a man, who, a few years ago, while driving a gig, happened to overturn it, by which accident his wife had her leg broken. To this very day he imputes the misfortune to his recklessness in proceeding on his journey, after he had observed that a *pyet* (magpie) had crossed his path. Innumerable instances might be adduced to prove how deeply rooted superstition had been in the minds of our predecessors, when even in our day its dregs influence the actions of many whose education should place them beyond its power. The strong-minded Burns himself confesses that, when alone in an *eerie* place, the

springing of a wild duck from its lair, would so startle him, that it required an effort of philosophy on his part to shake off its idle terrors. Burns, it is true, had in his boyhood stored his mind with all the stories of witches, brownies, and fairies, which a garrulous old woman could relate, and who, as he tells us, had the best collection of these stories in the country side; but what boy has not listened with interest and terror to tales of witches, ghosts, and goblins? Stories which make a deep impression on our youthful minds, generally have an effect, either for good or evil, upon our riper years; it is therefore the bounden duty of those who have children under their charge, to teach them nothing but what may be of advantage to them in their after life. Should it be thought necessary to teach them the history of our country during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, an antidote to the absurd beliefs that were so widely spread among men at that period, should likewise be put into their hands. Some men of intelligence laugh at the idea of listening to the stories of Witchcraft, which occupied so much of the time of our priests and our lawyers during these centuries, but if they would consider for a moment, they would see that, however ridiculous the subject may appear to the present generation, the time is not long past when our fathers and our mothers, in almost every county in the kingdom, were consigned to the stake, for the imaginary crime which *they* pretend to laugh at. It was however no laughing matter to the sufferers, and if history is worthy any thing, its chief value consists in showing us, as in a glass, the manners and customs of those who strutted their little hour, before our time, on this our sublunary sphere. It is certainly the chief duty of every man to make himself acquainted with the laws by which he is governed, and next to that it is his duty to compare these laws with those that regulated the conduct of his fathers. He will thus have it in his power to judge of the improvements which have been made in the social compact, and, as it were with a prophetic eye, calculate the time, when, in all probability, the

absurdities of the present day will be consigned to the shelves which contain the musty records of the things that were.

In laying the superstitions of the West of Scotland before our readers, we must acknowledge our obligations to Dr. Crawford, of Lochwinnoch, who has, in the most gentlemanly manner, furnished us with many interesting anecdotes, not only of his native parish, but of those that lie contiguous to it. His knowledge of the old Scottish language, and his general information on subjects connected with the history of his native country, peculiarly fit him for the task, and as he has communicated his stories in the dialect of the times when the events occurred, we trust it will give them a double zest to our readers.

One of the stories which he relates, refers to the superstition, *proof shot*. In the days when Witchcraft was believed in, certain persons were said to be in possession of a charm given them by the Devil, which made them invulnerable to a bullet of lead or iron. Their adversaries, however, discovered that the charm was rendered abortive, when the person who possessed it, was fired at with a piece of silver. It must be confessed, that even in our own day silver has a wonderful facility in finding its way to the human heart, but whether it would prove more destructive in the field of battle, if used in the form of balls, the warriors of our day have not thought it worth their while to ascertain. The *proof shot* story which we are about to lay before our readers, occurred in the year 1685, and is connected with the expedition of the Marquis of Argyll, against the forces of James VII., who were forcing upon an unwilling people a form of worship which they in their souls abhorred.

“Suth fast Stories, illustrating the Lochunyoch Mythology.

“*Proof Shot*.—The Marquis of Argyll, with Hume of Polwart, and Sir John Cochran, (son of the Earl of Dundonald,) from Holland invaded the West of Scotland with three ships, on the fanatcial or covenantical side, in 1685,



under the reign of King James VII., against the established prelatie form of the Kirk, to overturn the King's government. His lordship mustered about 1500 strong in Kintyre, and marched to Dumbartonshire. Some differences among the leaders happened, and their army vanished. The remainder crossed Clyde at Kilpatrick, about 150 men only. The Marquis was taken near Inchinnan, and was executed at Edinburgh. The rest of the rebels in a body went so far as the Muirdykes in the parish of Lochwinioch. The King's party attacked them. The Muirdykes battle was fought on 21 June, 1685. The rebels were about 75 men, commanded by Sir John Cochran and Polwart. The King's troops or chevaliers were two troops of horse commanded by Lord Ross (nephew to the said Sir John Cochran) and Captain Clelland of Faskin (kinsman also to Sir John). Night separated the antagonist parties, after the loss of a few killed and several prisoners. One of the killed was Captain Clelland. Sir John Cochran shot him by means of a *sillar button* torn from his *breik knee*: this being the only metal which was supposed competent to reach such as were superstitiously invested with the supernatural power of being *proof shot*.

Lord Ross conducting his troop by the Paisley Abbey (the seat of the Dundonald family) saw his\* grandmother, the Countess of Dundonald, looking from a window, and asked tauntingly, if she wished *to see her son's* (Sir John's) *head brocht hame on a platter*, or a large plate, or an ashet. But she had indeed soon cause to lament the fate of another of her kinsmen, Capt. Clelland.† The Earl of Dundonald's brother, Gavin Cochran of Craigmuir, (which is near Quarreltown) married a sister of the said Clelland of Faskin.

“The people in the neighbourhood of that battle are still believers that Capt. Clelland had power the *proof shot*

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\* Sir John Cochran's.

† Captain Clelland was opposed to her son, and a commander in Lord Ross's army.

fra the Deil, and Sir John shot him by a *sillar button* taen fra his breik knee.

A herd who lived at the Muirdykes helped the Covenanters greatly. His descendant lives now in Johnstoun and has many traditions of this battle. Dr. Orr here knows his name.

“*David Braedine’s fechting wi’ the Deil.*—David Braedine, portioner of Linthills in Lochwinioch parish He lived about 1700. He had much local celebrity, in *fechting wi’ the Deil*. He is spoken of as a singular *saunt*, at this day, on account of *thir* holy wars.

“The following account of his *dirdums* and exploits wi’ the Deil, and fairies, and kelpies, &c., was gotten frae yin of his *air-oes*, or his great-grandsons.

“Davat or David beand at Paislay, upo bisness, cuman hame, and unco weareit and forjeskit, and bean at the fit of his ain mailing (or the Linthills), said to himsell, “I wiss I had my auld beist to carrie me up this stey brae.” Nae suinar said than done; the auld naig was afore him. He said, “Cannie beist, I’se lowp on, wantan a helter.” He rade a bit, and at last cumman to a bog, the horse stacherit. Auld Davat rair’t, “Lard, help me! I’se red that I soud get a cloyt.” Spirits are eirie for the name of *Gude*. The pretendit horse or real kelpie, be-dune gade a great fluishter, and flew out fra the honest man, in a flaucht of fyre, and lair’t him into the water and glaur.

“Ae Sunday morning he rase airlie, and slippit on h’ breiks and shune, wantan stockings and justicott, and gade out to vizie the kye, gin they were amang the corn. But he saw nae kye, but he saw a great big black bill in amang the vittal. He ran after that bill; and the same bill jinkit and evitit him, and ran to aw airts wearisumlie. That race was unco dreich, and honest Davat, lyke yin wha was to gasp for breath cryde, “Lard, help me! will thou (to the bull) no gang out of my corn.” Juist as this speech was utterit, the ugsum bruit flew awa in a flaucht of fyre.

"Ae day in the morning, his wyfe was in the barn saying her prayers, she gat a gliff of fricht be an unyirthlie din, and she ran into the house, saying, "Och, gudeman, the Deil is reingean the horse graith in the barn, and fleyit me fra my prayers." Dauvat replyit, "I'se gang wi' thee, and we sall try him baith." Sae Sautan neir compeir't there again.

"Ae bonnie day Dauvat was flauchteran divots for the rigging of his house. A wee bodie wi' a green gown cam, and said, 'Gudeman, ye maun quat castan thir divots, for thay are the rigging of my house; or the best cow in your aucht sall die in this byre, gin ye dinna.' But Dauvat was red wud, and said, 'I wadna gae a strae for deils, fairies, brownies, and sic lyke trade.' Sae ane of his best kye gat its deid-ill in a jiffie."

The following story is an illustration of a superstition which still exists in many parts of Scotland. In the island of Arran, the distance of many of the houses from the parish church renders it indispensable for the minister to make regular visits to the more distant parts, for the purpose of baptizing the children, visiting the sick, and praying with any of his parishioners, who from some cause or other cannot attend divine service on the sabbath days. It often happens that a child may be three weeks old before the minister can make it convenient to attend for the purpose of baptism, and during all that time a man and woman are appointed to keep watch and ward in the same apartment with the mother and the child from sunset till sunrise, to prevent the fairies from taking away the child and substituting another in its place. After it is baptized no danger from the fairies is apprehended.

"*The Barbouie Bairn wi' the Fairies.*—Robert Blackburn, farmer at the Barbouie in the parish of Lochwinioch, He was appointed a kirk elder in 1694. He married Mary Craig. He was a militia man in 1745 against Prince Charles. His wife was sucking her only bairn, wee Willie. Ae nicht wee Willie was taen awa by the fairies, as she supposed, for he was not kirsten't yet.

She alarmed her husband. He grippit and vizeit aw the neuks of the bigging. He resorted to put up a prayer: he had a lang prayer. They fand the bairn after this prayer, in the byre, at a certain cow's mouth, unskaith't."

The story of Matthew King is one of many that might be selected to prove the industrious character of the brownies. That a belief in their existence pervaded the minds of our fathers cannot be doubted, for in many parts of the country farmers were in the habit of leaving meat and drink upon their tables expressly for the brownies, who, it was thought, could do more work between night and morning than any two ordinary men. When well used mischief was never attached to their characters, and even when affronted they would only retaliate, by quietly leaving the house where they had been so serviceable.

*"Caldermill Brownies.*—Matthew King, portioner of Caldermill and also miller there. He died in 1714.

"Matthew, ae nicht, observed his mill set a going be a strange unyirthlie and invisible agency. He ventured to go into the mill. He fand it going wrang, with regard to the gristing of the meal. He rectified the mill, and left it to the brownies. He set all cogs, girnals, sacks, muiter dishes, &c., out. There was no corn made in the mill that nicht. But the next morning he fand all the sacks girnals, &c., filled up to the lip with fine meal.

"Matthew's *oe*, who died in 1833, aged 89 years, being a clever and more than ordinary judicious man (an anti-burgher) related this story and believed it sincerely.

*"The Barnaich Faith.*—Elizabeth Jamieson was born in Little Micheltown, in the parish of Lochwinioch, in 1732. She was married to John Campbell, in the Middleton, in 1765. She died in 1830, aged 98 years.

"This Mrs Campbell said on 24th Sept., 1829, she went to service wi' the Burnsies of the Barnaich. Ae day she was sent from the Barnaich to Linthills an errand. When going throu Calderbank, she saw an auld woman gatheran sticks, fra wham she speir't the road to the Lint-hills. Afterwards she tauld this circumstance to the Bar-

naich fock. And they quickly jealousit that that auld woman maun hae been the witch wha livit in the neighbourhood of the Kirktoon. She was stricklie tergit whether the witch had laid a hand on her; for gin sae, she wadna be allow't to stay a single nicht at the Barnaich. On assuring them that she was not tutchit, she was allow't to stay for a nicht, as an experiment if she tauld the truth, but she was put out of the insett and spence, to the byre laft. The trial shaw't that nane of the ill spirit was on her. She was restored to the kitchen.

“Some of the hearers of this legend by Mrs Campbell, expressed some doubts of the auld gatherer of sticks possessing the power of Witchcraft. She tauld another story to prove the witch was a *real witch*, and she thocht it was irrefragable, thus:—

“Mary Gillies lived in the eastend of the Kirktoon, and span to ither fock. She was gree't for sum tyme to spin to the witch. At the end of her term she proposed to flit hame. Her mistress wishit her to byde langer. But she wadna consent. The witch then laid her hand upo Marie's heid, and said gin the cuttie wadna stay wi' her, she soudna spin to onie ither bodie. She gade hame and in a day or twa she gade sae clean red-wud, that she had to be bund wi' rapes. Her brither, John, gade about like a daft man, and at last he fand a witch doctor, and brocht that skeillie man fra yont Glasgow. The *wise* man tuck Marie into an auld kiln in the eastend, wi' a wee pat, a cat, a wee whein red aizles, &c., and stekit aw the doors, lums, wunnocks, &c., and mummling a spell, wrocht a perfyte cure on the sarie Marie Gillies. What a beneson, she said, was sic a man to the kintra syde! When the cure was gaun on there was nae sleep about the doors, and even the bairns were waukrife and unco restless and fashed wi' a eirie sort of carfuffle, no weill and no ill, aw in the eastend.

“Marie Gillies, during her distress, (as other reporters say) was brocht to the *Sorrow-Lin* before the Cloke or Calder mill, to be doukit. That lin is or was famous for

the cure of madness. John Gillies, brither of the patient, was to be the ducker, and Marie contrived to keep him under her or in the water till he was almost drowned. There was a great difficulty to rescue him with his life. Marie was riding on the surface of the water, and laughed at the spectators of her unearthly feat, riding or sitting on the water! They believed she was *not cannie*.

"Dr. Caldwell came by, by accident, and rescued John Gillies from the Lin, or Marie's Witchcraft—malignant spirit.

"Calder or Cloke-burn corn mill, or called sometimes *Sorrow Mill*. There is an ancient rhyme anent the said mill:—

"Cloke Sorrow mill has nae feir,  
She stands anoth a heuch:  
And aw the waur's at the weir,\*  
Whan she has water aneuch."

"*Strands' Race*.—Robert Orr, of Strands, maltman, in the Kirktoon of Lochwinioch, about 1720, happened to be at Beith and forgathered wi' yin Mr. Park of Mains-hill, drinking and sprosing and braggit the haille county of Renfrew to produce a horse to run wi' his horse. Strands, wha was a spunkie spirited man, coudna thole Park's brag, and laid down in a jiffie, fyve pund sterling, an immense sum at that time, on the board or table, and accepted the said challenge. Bnt Strands cam hame, after the yill had done its office, and he was doun i' the mouth, and he rued for his rashness. Janet Orr, Strands' wife, a douse and auld farant woman, steippit the important affair in her mind. The upcome of it was, my Lord Sempill had been a gude friend to Strands' family, and she gade to Castlesempill, and tauld the haille story to his lordship. Lord Sempill sent for Strands and rebuked him for his *foolage* conduct. But as things were sae, something maun be done. He speir't if Strands had a horse. Strands answered he had none, but he kend of a gude auld

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\* Weir signifies war, tempest, debate. In the present case it means tempest or rainy weather.



racer (whilk has been), that proper feeding and training nicht do sumthing. The auld horse was fetched and put under management. Lord Sempill wrote to the Earl of Eglintoun, asking him if he wad send his boy to ride a horse at Lochwinioch. Park forbye wrote to Lord Eglintoun for the same favour. His lordship had a great dinner party that day, and he produced thir letters and the matter was discussed at that dinner. It may easily be judged whilk of the twa petitions was preferred. The fatal day cam. A great concourse of fock forgathered at Lochwinioch. The horses started, Strands' horse fell far ahin. Ilka yin was anxious for the fate of Strands. He was the favourite of the gentle and semple. Ae man strained aw his efforts for the success of his friend. He cast his e'e on a particular man (betouch us!) a warlock, yin Samuel Arnot. That friend of Strands addressed this Samuel in an earnest manner—'O man, Sam, can thou do naething for saikless Strauns, wha seems to get the war.' The spaeman pronounced his oracular sentence, 'Wait till the neist bout.' The crowd resounded *the neist bout*. The breathless anxiety was very great that the *neist bout* wad change the bawks. Accordingly, in the *neist bout*, Park's horse snappered and fell, and the callan brack his brisket bane. Of course, Strands' horse wan the race. Great was the gaffaw, and deray; and the skreichs, and the yellochs of the rabble, gart the hills aich.

"My Lord Sempill ordered Strands to hae a washing boyn standand at his dore, filled wi' brandie punch, when his lordship and a whein gentlemen wham he bade to see the race, rade up to the door, and ilka ane teuk a bicker of it, and they cast ilk in the boyn a guinea. Strands was supposed to hae won mair be the boyn than be the race.

"By what power the wonning of this famous race, but by the nicht of the warlockrie of Sammie Arnot.

"*Witching of Strands*.—Robert Orr, maltman, or Strands at the Kirktoon of Lochwinioch, and Janet Orr, his wife, had a son, to wit, Robert Orr, young Strands,

who went a courting to the Lairs, for a braw and weil tochered lass named Margaret Rankine, daughter of Theophillus Rankine, Smith at the Lairs. This marriage happened in 1754. This Theophillus gained his fortune by making *locks* for muskets in Glasgow for Prince Charles's army, or for the Whigs in 1745.

"Young Strands was born in Mar's year, 1714 or 1715. He was a great burgher, attending the Brentschell Meeting House till he was greatly offended at the other members of that congregation wha put great ern bows on the doors, in order to steik out one M'Arra their minister, for they disliked him, altho' they had no faut against him whatever. Strands then apostatized from that sect. He was a great smoker, and he had a singular custom to lay by his pipe on Sunday.

To return to the marriage. The Lairs witches, offended at Strands for taking awa ane of their rich lasses, for pure clanship or interest of their own parish, contrived a pliskie against him, he being a stranger or a Lochwinioch man; they set on him in the Glen of the Lairs and cast aff some cantrips on him, that he soud hae nae bairns of course he had no issue.

"*The Muirland Wyfe*.—An auld wife lived ance about the Kame, named Jennock Wod, wha had the ugsum *bruit* of being a witch. The Laird of Sandiestoun ae mirk night was riding through the Foulferrie, his horse was suddenly gripped by an invisible hand or means. He had a sword or a shabbe, as the custom of those days. He drew it out. He aimed a blow at the ae side of his horse's lug, but it hadna ony effect. He then strack doun another blow at the tither side, which relieved his horse suddenly. The auld beast was aw trembling. The laird rade hame. He put the horse up in its staw, and he fand a sneddit hand, by the shackle bane, hingan by the halter or bridle reins. He rowed it up in a clout till the neist day. He caw't on the auld wyfe at the Kame, as neibour-lyke. She was in her bed, and she complained rather wi' a brash of sum illness

He condoled wi' her for her illness, and he howped she wud be up sunc. He rase fra the chair, and he wiss'd ; her to put out her hand, for he soud shake hands at his departure. She presented her car hand. But he refused to shake hands wi' that cauldryfe hand. He beggit that she soud put her richt hand out. But then she was obliged to confess that she had tint her hand. Sandiestoun produced the hand, and bade her to compare it and see if it may fit her broken arm.

"Sandiestoun came aff with the firm conviction of her being a witch."

*"Tam Giffin the Warlock.*—This laird of Sandiestoun, at ae nicht, in going hame frae Lochwinioch up the Crucks brae, he tint his scabbart. He had a wearisum screid in seikin for it. He at last fand it. He gade a bit of the road, it gade aff again, when he had a hantle of graiping for't the second tyme. He gat it in his haun again; he said to himsel, 'In the name of God, I sall be narr\* Sandistoun or I put thee on again.' Afterwards, as Sandiestoun saw Tam Giffin, Tam said to him, 'Sandistoun, gin thou'se gie me a bilgate† of tabaca, I'se tell thee what we were gaun to do to thee the ither nicht.' 'What coud ye do to me?' 'Do! we were just gaun to draw the thread of lyfe owr ticht, be thy ain swurd, for we gat aff the skabbart twist; gin thou hadna said yon word, we wad hae mann't to kill thee, but as sune as thou said yon word we aw gade awa as fast as we coud and left thee.'

"Sandiestoun aft gat Tam Giffin, the warlock, rydan on the Sheip house bauks, at the Sandiestoun. He wad hae said, 'Cum doun Tam, what is thou doing thair?' When the warlock cum doun, he wad hae said, 'Sandiestoun, will thou gie me a bilgate of tabaca?'

"The smith at the Kame had a prentice, a callan wha was owr fond of play. Ance his maister cryde on him wearisumlie to cum to the smiddie to help

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\* Nearer.

† Bilgate, a chow, or a chaw.

him to caw on a horse shue. When he gat the idle callan, he said we micht as weill cryde on Tam Giffin, as thee. He had na suner spoken than Tam Giffin stude ahint him wha was speiran, 'what he wantit wi' him? for' continued he, 'I was jist gaun by the door to a gathering o' the witches, warlocks, fairies, and ither o' my freins, at the Mistilaw, when I heard ye caw my name, and I thocht I wad answer you.'"

"Tam Giffin was sune after this fand lyand deid in a sheuch, aw cuirt (covered) wi' black' spots. His face had an unyirthlie thraw. Aw his hair was singit to the vera rits. His death cam fra his ain wanchancie confederates, as they jalousit him ovr outspoken to let out thair secrets."

"*Mrs. Bennet's blue clew.*—One Captain Bennet, a merchant-ship skippar belonging to Port-Glasgow, in the forend of the 18th century, was unco and even ovr naturally successful in his voyages. One of his rivals strove wi' him for six voyages, but Bennet beat him fairly in thir six voyages. There was a great fleet of merchant ships under the protection of a King's ship, collected and detained by contrary winds at the tail of the bank. Captain Bennet embraced a wee blink of a fair wind that carried him out of the channel of the river: and he completed all his voyage to Virginia. He came back into the Clyde, and he found the lave of the hail fleet lying at anchor at the tail of the bank. The Port-Glasgow fock hailed him in ridicule, supposing him returning from the tail of the Bank.

"He had a wife, it was believed universally that she was a witch and had a *blue clue*!!!

"*The Deil of Ardrossan.*—The people of the west of Scotland, or the fock of Cunningham and Renfrewshire, have a great many legends of the Deil of Ardrossan, or Michael Scott. Ae day a merchant of Dumbarton sailed in his ship from that town. After they had sailed several lays, they got a great storm and were shipwrecked on the oast of a desert island. All the crew were drowned

except himself. He, wandering about, found a cave on the shore and he took his abode in it. A mermaid found him there. She had a fondness to the stranger. And they afterwards lived together in that cave. The mermaid every day went to her own element, or the sea, and brought provisions. And after a whole year's residence, and his mermaid spouse being from home, he saw a ship, and he hailed her. The ship's crew sent a boat ashore, and they entered into conversation with this forlorn merchant, who related the tale of his captivity, and his living in a cave with a mermaid; and how that she brocht rowth of food, and gowd, and sillar, and gows (or jewels), and wine, &c., to him, so much as he kentna what to do wi' them. They, being outward bound, requested him to gar the beloved mermaid gather all the stores she possibly could, and they hecht to cum again after a year and a day, and tak him wi' the valuable spuilyie, or bootie. They cam at the time appointed, and the mermaid being out they made quick dispatch to get all the stores on board before she cam; which done, they sailed away, and when she cam home she found the cave desolated and herried. She pursued and overtook the ship. She demanded her husband and stores. The skipper cast aff a bundle (to the mermaid) of hoops, and hecht her to get her husband after she counted them. Which she did and requested her love, and the skipper gave her another bundle, again and again, till they reached Gourock and Lawrence Bay.

“The Dumbarton trafficker being on dry land refused to go with the mermaid again. But this mermaid told him that he must meet her at the cave where they spent sae monie happie days, a year and a day hence, and she committed her bairn (or mongrel half fish and man) which she bore to the merchant, to its father, telling him to nurse it and give it much lair, as he had plenty of sillar belangan to her: and she gave him a book whilk he wasna to let the miraculous bairn see, till it was able to read it perqueir and squaurilie; and the bairn after the directions he sall find in that buke, after he soud be able

to read it, could do what he liked, such as to order the foul thief to do onie thing when he pleased. The mermaid's bairn took up his abode in the auld castle of Ardrossan. He went under the name of Michael Scott.

"At that time the fock of Scotland were oppressed with *Pow Sillar*. And Michael Scott went to Rome to the pope to get it taen aff, and he muntit his horse on the tap of the castle, and the print of the horse's foot stands there to this day. He said "*Munt Deil and flee.*" And they went through the lift to Rome. And on the way the horse speirit at him, what the auld wyfes in Scotland said when they went to bed. He replied "*Neir mind, but munt and flee.*" At Rome he desired the fock of Scotland to be relieved of the *Pow Sillar*, or else that his horse will give three nichers. The horse gave ae sneer and made the haill city shake. And on the second, the lum pigs cam down. But they wad not permit a third nicher, they relieved him of the *Pow Sillar*. And hame Michael and his horse went.

"Ae day Michael Scott ordered the Deil to thrav rapes of the sea shore sand. His cluitieship coud no mak them unless he was allowed beer caff. The present worm-like appearances on the shore are the remains of this arduous task.

"A moss, or a marshy piece of country called Cunninghamhead moss, Michael Scott was desirous to have a road through it. He ordered the muckle Deil to execute this task. Vestiges of that road are seen to this day.

"Also Michael Scott, ae day, made a paction with the muckle Deil; but he betrucked Sautan. Michael Scott set his bonnat over a coal heuch without a crown, or he made a great hole in his bonnat. The Deil (according to his bargain) tumed in it gowd. But his Sautanship coudna fill the heuch. Michael Scott engaged to sell his saul finally to the Deil if he wad fill his bonnat wi' gowd. But he was tricked ance, thanks to the coal heuch.

"The warlock, ae day, set the Deil to erect a brig frae the island of Cumbra to the mainland of Hunterstoun



Point. Whan this stupendous work was almost finished, a luckless stranger or landlowper, unkennand wha was the *waar* or the mason, expressed his surprise at the greatness of this magnificent undertaking, thus, "*Gude be heir and Rowntree.*" Immediately Satan evanished in a flash of fire whilk consumed his prodigious brig, that fell into the sea, leaving the landstules or foundations of the said brig, one of them on Cumbra and the other near Kilbride. The Cumbra landstule is called the Deil's dyke to this day. It is a vein of whinstone and rises from sandstone."

*Rowntree.*—

"*Pyrus aucuparis*, (Hooker); or *Sorbus aucuparia*, (Smith).

Mountain Ash,

Service,

Quicken-tree,

} English.

Rowntrie, Renfrewshire, &c.,

Rowantrie, Perthshire, &c ,

Rodentrie, Aberdeen, &c.,

Rauntrie, Roxburghshire.,

} Scots.

"The rowntree is a famous antidote against Witchcraft. A Lochwinnoch saw (and aiblins some other parts of the country) is the following—

'Peice be heir and rowntree.'

used at times of fear and danger, on the faith of supernatural power of the *rowntree* against, and skaith from, unseen causes; for this belief is entertained by the faithful believers firmly still. Auld Jennie Orr (in 1838) at the Brigend o' Lochwinnoch, is used to tie a *cow* by the rowntrie up into the tails of her kye, to keep the witches and fairies off.

"The neibours are in use to put a *cow* of rowntrie over the lintle of the byre door.

"Some of the fock hupe and twine a wythee of rowntree around the milk cogs in milking the kye, for the same purpose.

"Some of the smiddies are defended by this anti-witch famous tree, with also a horse shoe nailed on the door.

"The following versions of this *song* or prayer, are extant here—

or  
 ' Sweet be heir, and rowantree,'  
 or  
 ' Gude be heir, and rowantree,'

' Peice be heir, and rowantree; this is Monday, or Tyesday, or Friday, &c., nicht.'

"Name the day of the week when the surprise happened. To the speaking of a witch or a warlock, it is necessary to mention the day of the week, in the following way—*this is Thursday, or Friday, &c.*, and I'll be far awa', in order that the witches, fairies, or any other unyirthlie craitors might not obtain any power over you.

"A song call't 'the Carle he cam ower the Craft,' be ane Laing, published in the Harp of Caledonia, vol. II. p. 295, thus—

' Yet he cam' banging ben the flore,  
 As ane wad do in his condition,  
 Says, Noo gude day, and *peice be heir*,  
 Took out his mill and gied's a sneeshing.

"The power of rowntree against all Witchcraft is recognised all wheres—

' Rown-tree and red thread,  
 Will put the witches to thair speed.'  
 ' Then Patie cam' in wi' a stenn,  
 Said,—*Peice be heir to the bigging*,  
 ' Your welcome,' quo' William, ' cum ben,  
 Or I wiss it may ryve frae the rigging.' "

*Patie's Wedding.*

"*Self-bore*.—When a knot (or the roof of a branch), or a hard piece of wood, is driven out of a plank or deal, it leaves a hole or what is called a self-bore. In the mythology of the West of Scotland, persons looking through such bores coudna be deceived by any kind of glauumery.

"A poet called David Caldwell, in the parish of Beith, takes notice of this *self-bore*, thus—

' A farm house I at length drew nigh,  
 And rapp'd hard at the dore :  
 The auld gudeman, then but did hye,  
 Syne I to him did roar.  
 He turn'd and geid a feirfu' cry,  
 It's thieves : get up, Will Orr,  
 Tak' down the gun, man, and let fly,  
 At them thro' the *Self-bore*.

Wi' speid this nicht.' "

*Caldwell's Poems, p. 51.*

The following story was related to the editors by Mr. James Lee, farmer, Stanley Green, who is ready to vouch for its authenticity. It goes far to prove, that in some parts of intelligent Scotland, the belief in Witchcraft has still a strong hold on the minds of a certain class of our fellow subjects, and were such a belief fanned into a flame, there is not a doubt but that in our own day, the cruelties of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries would be revived. Daily experience teaches us that the priests of the present time are as fond of power as ever they were in any age of the world; and in no period of their history had they such an opportunity for exercising that power, as when they could persuade the world that the Devil was in the habit of mixing with men, not only in the figure of a man, but in that of cats, hares, lions, tigers, &c., and that when *surprised*, he could take himself off bodily in the form of a *flaught o' fire*. Lawyers presided at the trials for Witchcraft it is true, but is it not strange that clergymen were generally the accusers, and the commissions appointed by government had always a pretty strong infusion of that class to assist them in ferreting out those who had sold themselves, body and soul, to one, whom we are told could punish, but could by no means reward. Our laws, however, we are proud to say, now offer a sure protection to the aged, the imbecile, and the eccentric, from the boundless cruelties of ignorance and superstition; and the lonely widowed inmate of a sequestered hovel bids as fair a chance of reaching her last dwelling place in peace, as she who inhabits a lordly palace.

The story we are going to relate, refers to an aged widow, who was, or rather still is, reputed a witch, but though she is shunned by her neighbours, there is little chance of her ever being personally injured by them. The following is an outline of the story that brought us acquainted with her history.

*James Lee suspeckit for ane warlock.*—Mr. James Lec, while travelling between Ayr and Newton Stewart,

fell in with a drover who had been at Ayr on the preceding day with his cattle. As their journey lay in the same direction, they entered into conversation, and when the day was wearing to a close, they came to a place where the road branched into two, the one running more inland, while the other kept nearly in a line with the coast. Mr. Lee asked the drover which of the roads he intended to take, and received for answer, that "the shore road was not only the best, but that it was by far the nearest, and yet," continued the drover, "I never travel that gait when the day is so far gane as it is now." "What are your reasons for so doing?" inquired the astonished Mr. Lee, "Ye see," said the drover, "there's an auld woman lives in the neighbourhood o' that road, an' it's strongly suspected that she's a witch, and the maist o' folk here awa' wad rather tak' the roun' about way than put themsels in her power, especially if it's near gloamin." "Hoot awa' wi' your nonsense," replied the farmer, "I never saw a witch in my life, an' if I see ane the night it's mair than I'm expecken; come awa' wi me, an' if we fa' in wi' the auld wife, I'll tak' a' the skaith that'll befa' us on the road on my ain head, be't either frae witch or deil. I thought a' thae beliefs had been confined to auld women and weans, an' had little expectation to hear a man o' your appearance gi'eing credit to sic out o' the way kin' o' stories. If the folk o' this kintra side believe as you say they do, it gies me but a poor opinion o' their intelligence, an' I beg it o' you, if ever you should come to our side o' the kintra, never to speak a word o' witches, or ye'll be the laughing stock o' baith young and auld." "But," said the drover, "listen to a story that happened no lang sinsyne on the verra road that ye wad fain hae me to gang. No far frae the road side stan's a mill, the owner o' which had some hoo or ither offended this witch bodie—they're gayan easy offendit ye ken?" "I ken naething about the matter," replied the imperturbable doubter. "Weel, weel, ye'll sune hear how it happened," resumed the drover. "The witch bodie gaed awa muttering something to hersel' which

naebody could understan'; but mark the upshot, in a week or twa, the biggest spate that ever was seen in thir parts cam dune, an' completely flooded the mill, an' destroyit a' the meal the miller had been makin' for a week afore. Noo if that wasna Witchcraft, what was't?" "I think it was a spate," replied Mr. Lee, "but we're losing time, an' as we hae a gude wheen miles to travel before we reach our resting place, we'll just tak' the shortest cut." So saying, he proceeded onwards taking the shore road. The drover, ashamed of his fears, screwed up his courage to the highest pitch, and followed his companion with as good a grace as a thief might be expected to exhibit when journeying on a road where he expected every minute to meet a sheriff officer. Every turning of the road was to him a source of new uneasiness, and as the evening thickened around him, every object in the distance assumed to his alarmed imagination the undefined lineaments of the being he so much dreaded. His fellow traveller saw at a glance what was passing in his mind, and to divert himself, at his expence, related with provoking minuteness, all the witch stories his memory could supply him with, in a manner which made the drover almost as suspicious of the company he was in, as of the old woman that *droon't* the mill. At length, after travelling some miles under the shades of night, much to the drover's satisfaction, they reached the house where they were to take up their lodgings. As Mr. Lee intended to set off early in the morning, he ordered supper to be speedily prepared, and in the interim partook heartily with his companion of a bowl of whisky punch. The presence, and the conversation of the landlord, soon restored the drover to his usual talkativeness, and when his companion retired to his bed, the two remained seated at the kitchen fireside, enjoying themselves over an additional gill of whisky which the drover had ordered. A thin wooden partition separated the place where our friend lay and the kitchen, so that it was in his power to hear, if he had been so inclined, whatever conversation was going forward. At length a question from the landlord arrested

his attention ; he asked at the drover if he had any previous acquaintance with the person who was travelling along with him. "No," was the reply, "and yet," continued he, he did little less than force me to travel the shore road with him, and at this time o' night too." "But did ye no tell him about the witch that's suspectit to waylay folk wha travels that road under clud o' night?" "I did," was the drover's reply, "but I maist suspect he's no muckle better himsel' ; lord, man, the stories he tauld, an' the way he tauld them, an' the queer views he has o' things, perfittly dumfounder't me; I can assure you that I never was sae anxious to see your house in my life as I was the night." "That's odd," quo' the landlord, "d'ye think I'll be safe wi' him in the morning? ye ken the reck'ning's no pay't." "I think there's nae fears o' him paying the reck'ning," returned the drover, "but then if he is what I maist suspect he is, he may pay you wi' what may luke like gude eneuch siller, but whilk will turn in your pouch to neither less nor mair than sklate stanes ; we a' ken the deevils' siller's like himsel', no verra chancie to keep." The conversation, much to the amusement of Mr. Lee, was carried on in the same spirit for some time longer, and when he rose in the morning, he observed that the landlord's attention was directed more than he thought necessary to his person, and when he paid his score, the landlord subjected his money to a more than usual scrutiny. Mr. Lee often repeats the above story for the purpose of showing that our boasted knowledge has not yet extended beyond the parishes that lie contiguous to our cities and towns, and we quote it to show that the belief in Witchcraft is not yet wholly eradicated from our land.

The earliest existing case of Witchcraft in the records of the High Court of Justiciary, is that of Agnes Mullikine, alias Bessie Boswell, in Dunfermline, in the year 1563. According to Pitcairn's Criminal Trials, she was "Banist, and exilit," and we must confess that it is almost the only instance we have fallen in with, where so mild a sentence was pronounced.



The following brief notice of the last person who suffered for Witchcraft in these kingdoms is curious:—In 1698, a girl of 19 years of age, in the town of Antrim, having eaten a leaf of sorrel which she got from a woman reputed to be a witch, fell into convulsions and vomiting. She is said to have vomited horse dung, needles, pins, feathers, bottoms of thread, pieces of glass, nails, an iron knife above a spang long, egg shells, &c. The accused was immediately committed to the county prison, and at the assizes held soon after, was hanged and burned. In 1716, Mrs. Hicks and her daughter only nine years of age, were hanged at Duntingdon, for selling of their souls to the Devil; tormenting and destroying their neighbours, by making them vomit pins, and raising a storm. In 1722, at Dornoch, Sutherland, an old woman was accused of being a witch, her crime was transforming her daughter into a poney, and getting her shod by the Devil, of which crime she was found guilty and burned. The act against Witchcraft was not repealed in England and Scotland till 1750; and in Ireland in 1821.

In the revolution of human fallacies and prejudices, the belief in Witchcraft has disappeared from the minds of the more civilized part of mankind; the bigotry and superstition of the past ages have done their work, but the blood of the martyr has now ceased to hiss on the burning brand, and the torture, the ordeal, and the Devil's mark, are now being speedily forgotten. Notwithstanding the rapid progress of men's minds in the march of improvement, we have yet to regret that many traces of the darker superstitions still remain among us;—though persecution dares not now unveil her scowling features—though her power has passed away like the broken reed that withstood the mountain torrent, yet men are to be found whose minds are deeply stained with the grossest superstition, who publicly advocate the folly of wisdom, and declare that “ignorance is bliss;” who can pray that men may be brought back to the *happy simplicity of their forefathers*; who would immolate the ripening fruits of knowledge upon the

altar of a miserable fanaticism, and again kindle the flame, the smoke of whose embers is not yet totally extinguished. That such men should be found degraded enough, not only to entertain such opinions, but having the barefaced effrontery publicly to avow them, justifies the assertion, that among the more illiterate and uninformed, the remains of many of the grosser superstitions yet remain and are mixed up with the every day circumstances in which life is passed.

An inquiry into the numerous superstitions which still linger among us, and whose origin may be traced to the darker periods of our history, would not only present a wide, but an important field of discovery and improvement; we must, however, confine ourselves in the present work to a few of the most popular, and which, notwithstanding the courting scrutiny of science, seem acquiesced in, or at least innocently submitted to, even by the better informed.

*Evil Eye.*—In the reign of ignorance and superstition, the power and influence of demons were not more an object of terror, than the invisible shafts shot from the malignant eye of envy and revenge. Mankind, equally ignorant of the laws of nature, and of the casualties that followed in consequence of their violation or neglect, sought for the principle of failure or disappointment, not in the interrupted harmony of immutable order, or the reckless results of discarded prudence, but in the dreaded faculties which they themselves had gratuitously conferred on those whom they feared or had offended. No physical organ of the body is so capable of manifesting the inward workings of the mind as the eye. The compressed lip may show indomitable firmness, and the stretched nostril indicate combative courage; but the eye may melt in pity, or be kindled into rage—may flash indignant scorn, or glance envenomed with deep-rooted hate. It is not wonderful, then, that the eye should have early attracted the notice of our ignorant ancestors, and been by them invested with miraculous powers. Among the numberless superstitions which credulity has ever been ready to receive and

acknowledge, no one has been more extensively diffused throughout all countries and in every age, than the malevolent injuries inflicted by an evil eye. The ancient Pagans and the early Christians seem to have contemplated it as among the vices of the heart originating in envy, and whence sprang that malevolence which proved injurious by the look.\* From this source is probably derived the fable of the fascinating powers of the serpent and some other animals over their prey. In the words of a modern writer, "If mankind, sickening, wasted and died, while the secret source of corrosion was unseen, the superstition of darker ages ascribed it rather to demoniac agency, than to distempered organization. When the fruits of the earth were blighted, or the works of patient industry perished; if disappointment lowered over the morning of life, and its evening set in sorrow;—no account was held of the casualties inseparable from sublunary dispensations."†

Credulity in fascination by the eyes of mankind has been universal, and until later times various expedients have been resorted to for counteracting its effects. The remedy alluded to by King James was practised in the county of Kircudbright so late as 1722, by "knitting rountrees, or sundriest kind of herbs to the haire and tailles of the goodes" (cattle.) In the parish of Eastwood, Renfrewshire, there lately resided a farmer, who, besides using the above precaution to prevent his cattle from the effects of an *evil eye*, never failed for his own preservation, on the entrance of a stranger into his dwelling, to turn the burning ember in the grate as an antidote to *skaithe*, should it so happen that the stranger should cast on him an evil eye. Relics of the whimsical, and now almost obsolete notions of our superstitious forefathers, though rare in our towns and cities, are yet found lingering in many instances among our rustic population. An instance of this kind happened lately in Auchteraven, Perthshire. A farmer having bought

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\* Mark vii. 21, 22.

† Dalzell on the darker superstitions of Scotland.

a cow, whose milk at first, upon churning, seemed to refuse to yield butter, the old women of the neighbourhood were regularly convened in conclave, when they unanimously decided that "it was the *sign of something*," and that Hawkie had got the "*blink o' an ill e'e*." By order of the conclave, a bottle full of the milk was thrown over the former owner's house. The churn was taken out at the door *empty*, and brought in at the window *full*—still with no effect. At last the cow was walked away a hundred yards, brought back, and tied to a new stake in the byre ; after which her milk yielded abundance of butter, the owner and others concerned, remaining quite satisfied of the virtue of the charm.

The progress of intelligence has done much to abolish the numerous superstitions connected with the management of the dairy, and experience has now shown that cattle are liable to organic derangement and mental excitement, which disturb the circulation of the fluids, that require proper attention and kindly treatment to overcome. The introduction of machinery conducted upon scientific principles, has also tended powerfully to remove former prejudices, and to show that it was not the *blink of an ill e'e*, but mismanagement and neglect of cleanliness that were the true sources of the evil which their ignorance attributed to sorcery and Witchcraft. Perhaps no improvement in the practice of the dairy has been more efficient in removing vulgar prejudice and popular superstition, than the introduction of the churning machine. The virtue of the milk cannot now be extracted, or rendered unproductive, or transferred to the *cheese hold* of another, *thorow a haire tedder*, or by drawing a spicket fastened in a part which was wont to bring milk as far as a bull could roar ; and gave to cheese, made of the remainder of the milk so strained, the property of swimming in water like a cork.

All that have the management of a dairy know that at certain seasons of the year butter will not "come" from cream, nor milk be converted into curd, with the same ease as at others. The modern reasoners on the causes of

things, look upon this as being occasioned by the sort of food the cattle take, but all the farmers' wives of last century knew perfectly well that it was the effect of nothing else but some envious person's evil eye, and they took their measures accordingly.

On the return of the milk-maids from the loaning, with their milk pails upon their heads, when the foremost took down her vessel in order to pass under the door-way, the mistress was ready to drop a horse shoe heated red hot into the milk.

It was necessary that the ceremony should be performed at the instant when the milk-maid was lowering the pail; and as it was further required that no one should be aware of the good dame's intention, the troop of milk-maids were often thrown into the utmost dismay by the sudden bubbling and hissing of the milk by the heated shoe. The loss of the whole of the milk was the usual consequence, to say nothing of the work created for the cooper by the crash of tumbling *cogues*; but those were matters of inferior importance, the future productiveness of the milk being an ample set-off against lesser mischances—and that, it need scarcely be added, in the opinion of the actors, was invariably secured.

In Stirlingshire, about thirty years ago, the superstitious belief in an evil eye was very prevalent, and people were found, who pretended by charms, amulets, &c., to prevent and cure persons or animals that happened to be afflicted by its supposed influence. The following case we have from a respectable individual to whom the parties were known, and whose better information enabled him to trace to its true source the evil which ignorance and superstition had attributed to supernatural agency. Our informant states, that a landed proprietor, in the neighbourhood of Stirling, had granted a small piece of land to be used as a common by the tenantry, for the purpose of grazing. The consequence was, that the ground, which was only capable of yielding a produce capable of sustaining four or five cows, was stocked by upwards of twenty,

the stronger of whom made their way to the best of the pasture, while the weaker from mere starvation got into bad condition, and yielding a reduced and inferior quantity of milk, were considered *elf-shot*, or suffering under the malignant influence of the evil eye. On these occasions, the "charmer," who was generally the blacksmith or farrier of the place, was sent for, who seldom failed to point out the very place where the cow had received the injury; or, in the event of being blighted by an evil eye, administered a quantity of salt and water, by spouting it first into the mouth, and then into the ear of the cow, also recommending a quantity of hay and a drink of meal and water, with an immediate removal to another place of pasturage: he had thus the satisfaction of being paid for performing a cure which richer and more abundant food had alone effected.

The charms for the prevention and cure of blight were not always of so substantial a nature as the above. In Wales, where this superstition is found to exist to a considerable extent, the antidote is found vested in the virtue of the household cat; this, of all other domestic animals the most selfish and forgetful of favours, seems, however, to have been a great favourite, not only with the witches themselves, but with others, in counteracting their spells and forcing them into a compliance for the recovery of the individuals afflicted. The following anecdote we have from a gentleman late of the army, who, during his residence in Wales, paid much attention to the customs and superstitions of its inhabitants. Being quartered in a farm house, one of the cows had become unwell, and it being recollected that one of the family had offended an old woman in the neighbourhood, and who had been observed to fix her eyes with more than ordinary attention on *the cow* in question, it was at once concluded that she had cast upon it the fascination of an *evil eye*, and that it was necessary to call in the aid of a charmer, for the purpose of removing the spell. It being lucky for a stranger to assist in the ceremony, our inform-



ant was requested to take a share in the proceedings. The household cat was then carried into the cowhouse, and the cow standing south and north, the cat was passed into the hands of the stranger three times over the back of the cow towards the east, while he regularly returned it to the good woman beneath the belly of the cow towards the west: the cow was then placed in its stall, and with a sufficient supply of good food recovered daily.

Superstition in its every form is the product of ignorance, and while confined to the innocently ridiculous, may be a subject of mirth, or at most of derision; but when we find it embracing within its range the darker passions of the human mind, and seeking redress for supposed injury in the callous proceedings of legal persecution, or in the malignant spirit of revenge, exposing individuals to popular fury or private retaliation, it then becomes a matter of deeper and more permanent interest; and while it excites our astonishment at the folly of its deluded votaries, it claims our pity and commiseration for the victims that fell a sacrifice to such ignorance and error. The records of past centuries bear ample testimony of the extent to which legal prosecutions were carried. In 1646, two hundred persons were tried, condemned, and executed for Witchcraft, at the Sussex and Essex assizes alone. But the amount of injury and suffering sustained by individuals from popular fury and private malice is beyond calculation. If cattle were afflicted with any disease which village farriery did not understand,—or if, in the complicated diseases of infancy and childhood, symptoms appeared which were beyond the intelligence of the self-taught midwife, or the comprehension of the indolent and unthinking apothecary—if, through the influence of atmospheric phenomena crops were blighted, or if, by the miller mistaking the true measure of his *muiter*, the produce fell short of the average quantity—if the acids generated in the unwashed churns, which laziness refused to clean, and ignorance declared unlucky, counteracted the regular process of extracting the butter from the cream; then were

the cattle, the children, the crops, the mill, and the churn bewitched, and all their recollection and ingenuity put to the stretch, to discover the obnoxious individual whose covetous or malignant eye, had shot its baleful beams on the *goodies* and *geir* of the injured party. Suspicion never failed to fix upon some one, whose every action was called to memory, and his or her remarks, by some newly discovered coincidence, brought to bear, either directly or indirectly, upon the case in question. Then was the pricker, or professed witch-finder, one of whom resided in almost every parish, let loose like a bloodhound upon the unfortunate, yet innocent and unsuspecting individuals. With the idle and the worthless in his train, he entered the dwelling of his unhappy prey, whose terror at the alarming and unexpected visit of this unwelcome personage, whose appearance intimated torture and suffering, was hailed by him and his abandoned associates, as an unequivocal mark of positive guilt, and as affording sufficient ground for submitting the suspected person to the ordeal of drowning, or the more lingering tortures sanctioned by law, and considered necessary to the conviction and condemnation of the individual.

The cruelties committed by popular violence, and by the more hidden, yet not less effective means resorted to for the gratification of private malice and revenge, seem in our forefathers' days, to have been sanctioned by the authorities, or allowed to pass as if unobserved. One thing at least is certain—the perpetrators were not called to account for their violation of the public peace, nor did punishment follow the most flagrant acts of inhumanity, committed upon the unfortunate individuals who became the objects of private suspicion, or whom the voice of public slander had branded with the hated name of witch. We find, even in the end of the eighteenth century, a case occurring in Stevenston in Ayrshire, which shows that even at that late period the vulgar were permitted to take the law into their own hands, for the purpose of assaulting with impunity the aged and the infirm,

whom the phantoms of their own imaginations had invested with unreal terrors, which would have vanished before the broad light of investigation. In the town above mentioned, there resided an individual, who, besides carrying on the butcher trade, kept a dairy cow for the supply of himself and neighbourhood. In his immediate vicinity lived an old woman who occasionally bought from him the small supply of milk which she required, and, being of a talkative and gossiping turn of mind, often went to the byre, or cow-house, to wait the milking of the cow. From some cause unknown to the proprietor, the cow got into bad condition, and was removed to give place to another, which, after a time, also became ill. Suspicion then fell upon the old woman, who was blamed for being the cause of the distemper with which the cows were afflicted, but which might easily have been traced to the imperfect shelter from the cold, and the limited quantity and bad quality of the provender. The proprietor having purchased a third cow, was in the act of driving her into her appointed stall, when the unsuspecting old woman made her unwelcome appearance; the flesher, unable longer to bridle his passion, and impressed with the idea that she had again appeared for the purpose of blighting the prospects he entertained of his new bargain, and being aware that the only preventive of a witch's skaith, was to draw blood from her *above the breath*, drew out a knife from his sheath, and immediately gave the old woman a cut across the brow, exclaiming that he would prevent her from again casting an *ill e'e* over his cow.

The philosophy of this superstition has been variously accounted for; but the most extraordinary illustration we have met with, is that by the Reverend Joseph Glanvill, who was not only chaplain to Charles the II., but a fellow of the Royal Society of London, and who was also a firm believer in Witchcraft. In speaking of the evil eye, he says, "I am apt to think there may be a power of real fascination in the witch's eyes and imagination; by which, for the most part, she acts upon ten-

der bodies. For the pestilential spirits, being darted by a spiteful and vigorous imagination from the eye, and meeting with those that are weak and passive in the bodies which they enter, will not fail to inflict them with a noxious quality, that makes dangerous alterations in the person invaded by this poisonous influence; which way of acting, by subtile and invisible instruments, is ordinary and familiar efficiencies. And 'tis now past question, that nature for the most part acts by subtile streams, which pass from one body to another.—Yea, some kinds of fascination are performed in this grosser and more sensible way, as by striking, giving apples, and the like, by which the contagious quality may be transmitted, as we see diseases often are by the touch. Now, in this way of conjecture, a good account may be given, why witches are most powerful upon children and timorous persons, *viz.*, because their spirits and imaginations, being weak and passive, are not able to resist the fatal invasion; whereas men of bold minds, who have plenty of strong and vigorous spirits, are secure from the contagion; as, in pestilential airs, clean bodies are not so liable to infection, as other tempers. Thus, then, we see 'tis likely enough, that very often the sorceress herself doth the mischief; and we know, *de facto*, that providence doth not always secure us from one another's injuries."

*Second Sight.*—No place in Scotland presents a more fertile field to a lover of legendary lore than the Highlands. Every glen has its legends, which are as firmly believed in at the present time by many of the inhabitants of these regions, as they were an hundred years ago, and charms to undo the effects of Witchcraft are still being in use in many parts of that portion of our native country. Nor is it strange that people so situated should have their minds filled with belief in supernatural agencies. The lonely glen, surrounded by rugged mountains, on whose brows the ever-varying clouds either repose in wreathed folds, or sweep on in gloomy grandeur before the whirling blast, are objects well calculated to fill the soul with feelings of dread

awe, or rapturous delight. Add to this the distance of many of the houses from one another, the solitariness of the occupations of the greater part of the inhabitants, shepherds or fishermen, and the length of the nights in winter, and we will not be surprised that superstition should retain its hold in the minds of a people whose circumstances place them so peculiarly within its power. Till of late years a journey to many of the districts of the Highlands required as much consideration as a voyage to America does now. For that reason the intercourse between the northern and western parts of the Highlands with the Lowlands was of an extremely limited nature, and was chiefly carried on for the purpose of enabling the Highlander to exchange his fish, his kelp, or his cattle, for the productions of more favoured climes.

The invention of steam vessels has, however, laid open the whole range of coast which stretches from the Mull of Kintyre to Cape Wrath, and an excursion to some of the innumerable and deeply-indented bays which lie between these headlands, is, during the summer and autumn months, of almost daily occurrence. Little more than twenty years ago, a person might be detained by contrary winds ten or even fourteen days betwixt Campbellton and the Clyde, a voyage which can now be performed in about as many hours. The effect of this improvement in navigation cannot fail to have a favourable influence on the inhabitants of our Highlands, and our isles, and bids fair, at no distant day, to break down the barriers of language and of customs which have for so long a period divided the people of Scotland into two classes. The inhabitant of Lewis or of Skye, can now leave his home for the low country, and tell his family the hour, or at least the very day, when he will return. He has thus with little waste of time the opportunity which was denied to his fathers of mixing with mankind, and observing how far the customs of his native district differ from the customs of the people among whom he is sojourning; and as a person is apt to imbibe a taste for whatever appears pleasing

in his sight, he will assuredly carry a portion of the manners of the stranger back with him to his native retreat. The superstition of the Highlander will thus gradually melt away before the sun of commerce, and his tales and his legends live only in the reveries of his national bards.

The *second sight* is a superstition which is peculiar to the Highlands, and has the honour of having been written upon in a grave manner by the gravest philosophers of the last and present centuries. Dr. Johnson said that he would rather believe in the second sight than in the authenticity of the poems of Ossian. The learned Doctor, in spite of his philosophy, was subject to the most gloomy forebodings; his mind would therefore be easily impressed with anything which bore the slightest resemblance to the visions which occasionally clouded his vigorous understanding, and, as might have been expected, would rather believe in the oracular predictions of the hoary seer, than in the dogmatical assertions of the uncompromising James M'Pherson. The mysterious language of the pretender to the second sight, bears a strong resemblance to the oracles of antiquity. It has generally been the custom for pretended prophets of past and present times, to speak of things to come in a manner that their prognostications may be applied to almost any event which the future may produce. Our double-sighted Highlanders act on the same principle; they talk in a mysterious manner of accidents by field and flood, in a country where numbers perish annually, either at their occupation as fishers, or in crossing the lochs and bays, which are so thickly scattered over that romantic country. If it should happen that a death takes place after the meaningless ravings of a reputed seer, the circumstance is laid hold on as a convincing proof of his foreknowledge, and his future sayings are treasured as little inferior to divine truths. Pretended prophets take good care never to specify dates, nor give names to either individuals or places. If they did so, the truth and falsehood of their predictions could be determined at once, and the prophet, if his prediction failed not, could triumphantly point to



his recorded prognostication. Still it is possible for a second-sighted Highlander to foretell the death of an individual, but it is also possible for the prophesier to be the means of accomplishing his own prophecy, either by his own hands or by the hands of an accomplice.

A case occurred in the Highlands this very year, which goes far to prove what we have inferred, and which, if followed up in a right manner, will, we doubt not, show to the world what kind of men these second-sighted seers are. The story was written by a lady who resided in the Hebrides at the time, and inserted in the *Glasgow Argus* newspaper on the 8th April, 1839.

“A very melancholy event happened at Raasay on the 11th January, attended with a singular fact. Mr M'Leod, gamekeeper to the laird of Raasay, went with his only brother on the morning of that day to Portree. As they were leaving that place to return home, the gamekeeper fell behind, and his brother, dreading no danger, came on without him. The other never returned. Day followed day without any tidings of the gamekeeper, though every search was made for him by the men of Raasay, and those of that part of Skye. After an interval of eight days, a man from Portree came forward, and stated that fourteen years ago, while he was herding cattle in the daylight, he had a vision of a man falling over a certain rock, which he described, dressed in light clothes, and resembling in his general appearance the individual who was amissing. It was agreed to visit this spot, and accordingly a boat was procured, and the “gifted” seer proceeded with a party of men in the direction of the rock by the sea side. At the precise spot the body of the unfortunate gamekeeper was discovered. It is supposed that, after he had left Portree, he had gone on in his journey as far as the cairn opposite Raasay, and that mistaking his way at this point, (for the evening was dark and stormy,) he had fallen over a rock and thus met with his death. The body was carried away amidst the tears and wonder of the people, who were astonished at this wonderful discovery.”

Such is the account given by the lady who was residing in the country at the time the occurrence took place. The editor of the *Argus* has the following sensible remarks on the case. "As the *second sight* has long since been abandoned to poets and novelists, it becomes a fair subject of inquiry whether any knowledge of the gamekeeper's death, could not have been obtained at *first sight*, by the person professing the occult power."

There can hardly be a doubt but that the above affair will be thoroughly investigated by the proper authorities, and even should they fail to bring forward sufficient proof to criminate the *seer*, a few such investigations will do more to root out the national superstition, second sight, than all the jargon of metaphysical theorists. Experimental philosophy rejects with scorn the mystified crudities which ignorance, and a desire to be thought wiser than our neighbours, would palm upon the world for truth. Our knowledge of the laws of nature, limited as that knowledge is, teaches us that she adopts the simplest methods to accomplish her ever varying wonders. The flower that paints the field, and the volcano that spreads fire, and smoke, and ashes over a whole region, are produced by the same single, yet efficient cause; and, however mysterious they may appear to our limited understandings, there cannot be a doubt but that the laws by which they are regulated, are of the simplest description. And yet there have been men vain and wicked enough to pretend that they held direct communication with the power that holds as it were the heavens in his hand, and with whom space, with its myriads of systems, is of necessity filled. To raise their foolishness to a climax, they robed that power in the gloomy austerities of their own morbid imaginations, and spread over gay and smiling nature, darkness, doubt, and cheerless despair. Unhappy in their own minds, they imagined that content and peace were not of this world's growth. They went farther; they told us of strife, and hate, and discord, in the world beyond our ken, and painted in graphic language, the wars which have

been, and are still being carried on, betwixt etherial essences, whom they at the same time admit cannot be destroyed.

In minds such as we have been describing, superstition had its root, and the ignorance of mankind, in the earlier ages of the world, prevented them from investigating the relations of any dreamer who chose to lay before them his mystical absurdities. One story would naturally produce another, till in process of time systems would be framed, and a particular class of men set apart to *explain*, or rather to darken what had been dark enough from the beginning.

Aware of the consequence their situation in life gave them in the eyes of the uninitiated, they set no bounds to their imaginings, and generations passed away, each one witnessing the increased, and still increasing power of the class which credulity and fanaticism had called into existence. To maintain their power over the minds of men, and to crush whoever had the hardihood to investigate their dogmas, they spread abroad the belief among their deluded followers, that those who were opposed to them, had leagued themselves with the powers of darkness, for the express purpose of letting loose anarchy and error on the lands over which they had been such efficient guardians. It is seldom that men investigate the causes which lead to the belief which, "grows with their growth, and strengthens with their strength;" they leave these matters in the hands of those who are set apart for the purpose; hence the implicit credence which the nations of antiquity put in their imaginary deities, and the tenacious hold which their priests took of the creeds which so deeply affected their worldly interests. The belief that the evil principle, or the Devil, has clothed himself in a palpable shape, has invaded every creed. Such appearances were supposed to be for the purpose of extending his influence among men; but it is rather singular that he did not array himself in a more pleasing form than the one we are told he generally assumed. Perhaps the promulgators of the ab-

surdity wished it to be inferred that vice and ugliness could by no means be separated. It is to be regretted that in modern times vice assumes a rather pleasing form ; rottenness may lurk beneath its surface, but smiles and graces too often gild its dangerous exterior.

It is not a little singular, that the second sight was never imputed to the influence of the Devil. It is now looked upon by many as a superstition, which, with the rest of its class, will speedily pass away ; but even in the days when to foretell an event which time still held within its folds, was sure to bring the prophet to an untimely end, the Highland seer was looked upon with awe and respect. If a person who was reputed a witch, had in her rage threatened evil on her persecutor, and that individual happened to be unfortunate in his business, all his misfortunes were attributed to the witch ; if, on the other hand, a person who had the reputation of having the second sight, was to foretell the death of a person, or the loss of a vessel at sea, it added to the sanctity of his character.

We have said above, that the prophesying of these men bore a striking resemblance to the ambiguous oracles of the Greeks and Romans. A plain, straight-forward answer was never returned by either of them ; a proof that they were ignorant of that which they pretended to know. Even if a second-sighted person were to foretell that on a given day a certain individual was to be struck dead by lightning, and the event were actually to take place, it would be no proof that he knew any thing more of the matter than other people. He had only hazarded an assertion which fate, or chance, or what you will, had made good. We all know that men are sometimes killed by lightning, and the person he had alluded to was as liable to be injured by it as any other living being. The bulk of mankind, however, would look upon him as a true prophet, and his future prognostications would find a ready belief in the minds of those who had neither opportunity nor inclination to investigate the matter.

Although the Highlanders have not classed second-sight

among the prerogatives of Witchcraft, they had, and still have, plenty of superstitions which flow from that source. Witch trials and witch executions were frequent in many parts of that country ; some of them exceeding in barbarity anything we have read of. There is a hill in Perthshire which bears the name of the Witches' Crag to this day, and tradition still tells how it acquired the appellation. An old woman, who had been *found guilty* of Witchcraft, was taken to the top of it, and there put into a barrel, the sides and ends of which were stuck full of sharp-pointed nails. The barrel was then fitted up tightly, and suffered to roll down the steep declivity amid the rejoicings of the infuriated demons who had gathered together to witness the poor old woman's tortures !! Where the barrel rested a bonfire was kindled, and it, and all that it contained, were consumed to ashes. It is very probable that the old woman had near and dear relations in the neighbourhood of the sad scene, and what their feelings must have been on that dreadful day we leave our readers to imagine. There can hardly be a doubt but that the authorities, both lay and clerical, would enjoy themselves, after their day's work was over, on the choicest viands which some neighbouring inn could afford. They would, in all likelihood too, call on the Being who said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy," to pour a blessing on the food which was set before them, although but a few minutes had passed since they had imbrued their hands, in the most diabolical manner, in the blood of age and helplessness. To show that it was no uncommon thing to dine publicly after an execution of witches, we will take the liberty to relate an anecdote connected with the burning of Margaret Lang, and the six individuals who suffered along with her in Paisley, in the year 1697. A few years ago, a very respectable woman lived in the west end of Paisley, whose grandmother had been a servant in the principal inn there, when the above mentioned burnings took place. She had often heard her grandmother relate, that after the house had been set in order for the

reception of the magistrates who were to dine there that day, curiosity prompted her to proceed westward, along what is now called Oakshaw street, for the purpose of ascertaining if the unhappy individual's sufferings were over. At the head of the West Brae she met one of the magistrates who was returning from the scene of blood, and being personally known to him, she inquired if the execution was over. "There's ane o' the witches in hell already," was the cold-blooded reply, "an' the rest 'ill shune fallow." Thus, by his own showing, they were assisting the Devil to his prey sooner than in the ordinary course of nature he had a right to expect. At the period we allude to, there were no houses in what is now called the west end of the town, and consequently a person standing on the spot where the bowling green, once a Roman prætorium, has been made, would have a view of all the lands that go under the ominous name of Gallow's Green. The woman was in sight of the vast crowd that had assembled from all parts of the country, and even from Ireland, to witness the disgraceful scene; but the smoke of the burning faggots, the painful and revolting smell, and her feelings on the occasion, induced her to return, and seek, amid the hurry and bustle of preparation, something that would divert her mind from the scene which she had but for a moment contemplated at a distance. So infatuated were the people of that age with regard to Witchcraft, that a stranger who happened to be in the innermost circle of the crowd that surrounded the fire, and whose staff was snatched from his hand by an officer who was within the circle, for the purpose of pushing back the legs of one of the sufferers that had obtruded themselves from the flames, looked at it when he received it back, as a man may be supposed to look when he inadvertently lifts an adder, and exclaimed, "I'll tak' nae stick hame wi' me to my hous that has touched a witch," and threw it into the fire.

Such were the manners and customs of those whom some among us are pleased to call our pious and exemplary forefathers! Twelve years before the burning of Mar-



garet Lang, two men, Algie and Park, were executed on the very same green for refusing to take the oath of abjuration, or in other words for their attachment to the Presbyterian form of church government; and within these few years a monument has been erected to their memories by the people of Paisley, over the place where their remains repose. Every good man will readily allow that it is but an act of justice, to perpetuate the names of those who have had moral courage enough to brave death in its ugliest form for conscience' sake, but where is the stone that is to perpetuate the memories of those who suffered a more cruel, and a more ignominious death than the two martyrs suffered? Many men indeed, who consider themselves intelligent, think that their names, and the imaginary crime for which they suffered, should be buried in oblivion. We fearlessly say, *No!* and for the following reason: namely, we have no other way of measuring the advances we are making in civilization, but by contrasting the manners and customs of those who have preceded us with the manners and customs of our own day; and though much has to be done in a moral point of view, we are immeasurably in advance of the age which consigned men and women to the stake for Witchcraft. The followers of Luther put Algie and Park to death, because they were attached to the form of worship established by Calvin and Knox—the followers of Calvin and Knox put Margaret Lang to death a very few years afterwards on the same spot, in a more cruel manner, because (as these wiseacres said,) they were attached to, and followers of the Devil! We really would not wish to see such times back again, and must condole with those who would, that they were not born an hundred and fifty years ago.

As some of our readers may not have had an opportunity of reading an indictment for Witchcraft, we shall subjoin a copy of one, which was served on a man and five women in Borrowstownnes, in the year 1679.\*

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\* See Appendix C.

## SECTION VI.

## APPARITIONS OR GHOSTS.

NOTWITHSTANDING the absurdity of the belief in the appearance of apparitions previous to the occurrence of notable events, or of the permission of departed spirits to revisit, for good or for evil purposes, the scenes of their former existence—it is only of late that its true nature has been philosophically examined, and a proper cause assigned for the credence given to it, even in an age of comparative refinement, and laying claim to considerable advances in scientific knowledge.

We have already adverted to a diseased brain as the true source whence spring phantoms, spectral illusions, &c., and have endeavoured to show that the second sight originates in a highly excited or diseased state of the organ of wonder, which delights to pry into futurity, and to seek gratification in a visionary intercourse with the state of the dead. The individuals most prone to this organic derangement, are those who inhabit mountainous districts—whose lives are spent amidst scenes of the wildest beauty and the sternest grandeur. In these abodes of solitude and silence the Highland recluse views with awe the war of elements in its most terrific form. Visions of his chief and of his followers engaged in battle, or perishing in the snow, or those dear to him by the ties of nature braving the dangers and the difficulties to which their rude life is exposed, come before him like day-dreams, and he sees, or thinks he sees, these visions as actual realities. He sees the hand of death concealed beneath the phantom cloud, and the winding-sheet unfolding itself in the descending avalanche of snow. He sees in the dark pale mist the form of the dead, and he in whom his soul was bound stretched on his bier, and his dark brown hair dreeping with the briny wave which has embraced him. He hears in the

wailing winds the voice of the spirit of his fathers, and in the moaning of the trees the sounds of the song of death. If to these waking dreams it chanced that some event corresponds, or seems to correspond, then is a prophetic character given to the inspiration, and in ignorance of the true course of nature he in whose imagination alone the phantom existed, is looked upon as one who has had a revelation from the inhabitants of the grave.

Among the well informed, had not an important circumstance called the attention of the religious public to the question, the belief in apparitions and ghosts would probably by this time have ceased to exist, and the terror of them been removed, as the inscription written on the faithless sand when washed by the returning wave. About the commencement of the eighteenth century, sceptical views respecting the state of future existence began to prevail and to be publicly advocated by men eminent for their acquired talent and natural strength of mind. The opinions promulgated by writers on this subject soon found many supporters, chiefly in the higher ranks of society; thence arose a fashionable class distinguished by the appellation of freethinkers. This excited the alarm of the supporters of religion, and many distinguished for their great attainments then began to consider if some additional arguments might not be brought to bear in opposition to the torrent of infidelity that prevailed, besides what they could procure from the sacred writings. In turning their attention to this subject, it was conceived that a direct evidence in favour of a future state might be advanced, if the Platonic notion could be once established, that there existed an occasional intercourse between the spiritual denizens of another world and the living inhabitants of this earth.

From the times of Addison down to Dr Johnson did the literature of the day teem with idle stories relative to dreams, apparitions, and ghosts.

Other means, equally extraordinary, were had recourse to in that age to confute the freethinkers, and prove the existence of ghosts. Deputations were appointed, and a

formula of queries was made out, under the auspices of John Aubrey, Esq., F.R.S., which were sent to the poor illiterate Highlanders, in order to procure all the evidence that could be collected from this superstitious source, respecting a future state of existence. "From the certainty of dreams, second sights, and apparitions," says Theophilus Insulanus, "follows the plain and natural consequence of the existence of spirits, the immateriality and immortality of the soul."\* Surely the truths of religion contained in the sacred writings, need no confirmation from the unphilosophical belief of the appearance, after death, of ghosts or apparitions. Yet so violent was the agitation of this question in the last century, that the zeal of some in its defence was carried to the most unreasonable height. The Rev. Mr. Wesley, in adverting to the subject, says, "It is true, that the English in general, and indeed most of the men in Europe, have given up all accounts of witches and apparitions as mere old wives' fables. I am sorry for it; and I willingly take this opportunity of entering my solemn protest against this violent compliment, which so many that believe the Bible pay to those who do not believe it. I owe them no such service. I take knowledge these are at the bottom of the outcry which has been raised, and with such insolence spread throughout the nation, in direct opposition not only to the Bible, but to the suffrage of the wisest and best of men, in all ages and nations. They well know, (whether Christians know it or not) that the giving up Witchcraft is, in effect, giving up the Bible. And they know, on the other hand, that if but one account of the intercourse of man with separate spirits be admitted, their whole castle in the air (deism, atheism, materialism) falls to the ground."

It is by the expression and enforcing of sentiments such as these, upon minds unprepared by education, and unaccustomed to inquiry, that the reign of superstition has been prolonged, and the purer doctrines of the Prophet of Na-

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\* Dr. Hibbert.—Philosophy of Apparitions.

zareth been perverted, and set at nought. But superstition, we know, has no ear to listen to the voice of reason—neither has bigotry ever willingly opened its eyes to conviction—and enough of both still remains, not only to retard the progress of knowledge, but to make it profitable for certain classes of men to advocate the necessity of conservative ignorance, and to throw the weight of their influence into the scale of opposition to scientific knowledge and educational improvement. But the time is fast approaching, when the out-pourings of those who “love darkness rather than light,” will be shamed into silence—when a knowledge of nature will not be accounted criminal, and an intimate acquaintance with the objects that surround us, will not unfit us for the proper discharge of the duties of life.

Among the numerous superstitions, now being fast removed, and their true nature brought to light by the progress of science, that of the appearance of spirits or ghosts is the most important. With this vulgar belief the crafty have, in every age and nation, imposed upon mankind, and, by alarming their fears, brought them under a blind submission to the most degrading artifice.

In the darker ages the influence of this superstition over men's minds, made the many an easy prey to the designing few; nor are we yet free from its baleful effects; though no longer scared by phantoms that have no existence, the institutions under which we live are still tinged with this unphilosophical belief. Many of the superstitions of our ancestors may be easily traced to those of the Jews, were adopted from them by the Christians of earlier times, and have descended to us almost unimpaired.

It would be out of place in our work, to enter into this field of inquiry; and as we have already stated our opinions respecting the cause that first led to a belief in ghosts, we will only lay before our readers the following remarkable cases, which are given on the most undoubted authority.

The first is upon the authority of Reginald Scott, who

states that he extracted the story from "out of the rosarie of our ladie, in which booke do remaine (besides this) ninetie and eight examples to this effect, which are of such authoritie in the church of Rome, that all Scripture must give place unto them."

"A certeine hangman passing by the image of our ladie, saluted hir, commending himself to hir protection. Afterwards, while he praied before hir, he was called awaie to hang an offender; but his enemies intercepted him, and slew him by the waie. And, lo! a certeine holie preest, which nightlie walked about everie church in the citie, rose up that night, and was going to his ladie, I should saie to our ladiechurch. And in the church-yard he saw a greatmanie dead men, and some of them he knew, of whome he asked what the matter was, and who answered, that the hangman was slaine, and the divell challenged his soule, the which our ladie said was hers: and the judge was even at hand, comming thither to heare the cause, and therefore (said they) we are now come together. The preest thought he would be at the hearing hereof, and hid himself behind a tree, and anon he saw the judicial seat readie prepared and furnished, where the judge, to wit, Jesus Christ, sate, who tooke up his mother unto him. Soon after the divels brought in the hangman pinioned, and proved by good evidence that his soule belonged to them. On the other side, our ladie pleaded for the hangman, proving that he, at the houre of death, commended his soule to hir. The judge hearing the matter so well debated on either side, but willing to obeie (for these are his words) his mother's desire, and loath to do the divels anie wrong, gave sentence, that the hangman's soule should return to his bodie, until he had made sufficient satisfaction; ordeiring that the Pope should set foorth a publike forme of praier for the hangman's soule. It was demanded, who should do the arrand to the Pope's holiness. Marie, quoth our ladie, that shall yonder preest that lurketh behind the tree. The preest being called foorth, and enjoined to make relation hereof, and to desire the Pope to take the



paines to doo according to this decree, asked by what token he should be directed. Then was delivered unto him a rose of such beauntie, as when the Pope saw it, he knew his message was true."

This ghost story, it will be evidently seen, is designed to intimate the reality of a purgatory, but the following may be accounted for on a very different principle. It is taken from Sir John Sinclair's Statistical Account of Scotland.

"About fifty years ago a clergyman in the neighbourhood, whose faith was more regulated by the scepticism of philosophy than the credulity of superstition, could not be prevailed upon to yield his assent to the opinion of the times. At length, however, he felt, from experience, that he doubted what he ought to have believed. One night as he was returning home, at a late hour, from a presbytery, he was seized by the fairies, and carried aloft into the air. Through fields of æther and fleecy clouds he journeyed many a mile, descrying, like Sancho Panza on his clavileno, the earth far distant below him, and no bigger than a nut-shell. Being thus sufficiently convinced of the reality of their existence, they let him down at the door of his own house, where he afterwards often recited to the wondering circle the marvellous tale of his adventure."

"Upon this story, I find, in Mr Ellis's edition of Brand's Popular Antiquities, the following comment is made:—"In plain English, I should suspect that spirits of a different sort from fairies had taken the honest clergyman by the head, and though he has omitted the circumstance in his marvellous narration, I have no doubt but that the good man saw double on the occasion, and that his own mare, not fairies, landed him safe at his own door.'"

Sometimes, when the mind is *morally prepared* for spectral impressions, the most familiar substances are converted into ghosts. Mr Ellis gives a story to this effect, as related by a sea-captain of the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. "His cook," he said, "chanced to die on their passage homeward. This honest fellow, having had one of his legs a little shorter than the other, used to walk in that way

which our vulgar idiom calls, 'with an up and a down.' A few nights after he had been committed to the deep, our captain was alarmed by his mate with an account that the cook was walking before the ship, and that all hands were on deck to see him. The captain, after an oath or two for having been disturbed, ordered them to let him alone, and try which, the ship or he, should first get to Newcastle. But, turning out on farther importunity, he honestly confessed that he had like to have caught the contagion; for on seeing something move in a way so similar to that which an old friend used, and withal having a cap on so like that which he was wont to wear, he verily thought there was more in the report than he was at first willing to believe. A general panic diffused itself. He ordered the ship to be steered towards the object, but not a man would move the helm! Compelled to do this himself, he found, on a nearer approach, that the ridiculous cause of all their terror was part of a maintop, the remains of some wreck floating before them. Unless he had ventured to make this nearer approach to the supposed ghost, the tale of the walking cook had long been in the mouths, and excited the fears of many honest and very brave fellows in the Wapping of Newcastle-upon-Tyne."

As some of our readers may be curious to see some of the *authentic* ghost stories, which figure in the writings of the learned of the seventeenth century, we shall transcribe a few of the most prominent for their edification. The relaters of them were firm believers in ghosts, witches, and haunted houses, and branded those who ridiculed the subject with the name of atheists. If the march of mind progress as steadily for the next century, as it has done since the days when Glanvil\* wrote, the people who live then will look on many of the superstitions of the present day, as but little removed from the absurdities of the 17th century. We do not, it is true, consign men and women to the stake for

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\* Chaplain to Charles II.

their opinions, but the worst passions of our natures are called into action for the purpose of pouring ridicule on the heads of those who may differ from us in matters of mere form. The subject whether a church should be supported by law, or based on voluntary principles, is agitating Scotland from John o' Groats' to the Mull of Galloway, and time, and money, and talent, are frittered away by people professing the same religion, on a subject which, in the nature of things, will never be brought to a bearing; and yet the conflicting factions appeal to the same book for arguments to support their cause. A person would almost think, that if the subject had been considered of importance by its divine author, it would have been as plainly stated as the injunction, "do unto others as you would that they should do unto you," and the simplest understanding would have known at once which of the parties to have followed. Mathematicians never call into question the proposition of Euclid, that the square of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the squares of the two sides added together; neither do astronomers abuse one another when writing of the parallaxes of the stars.

In "Satan," a poem written by the Rev. R. Montgomery, we have the following expression:—

"What reason cannot comprehend, belief can never claim."

It is these beliefs which have, for so many centuries, deluged the fairest portions of our globe with heart-burnings, hatred, strife, and bloodshed, and if we have, in the present work, held up to public view a few examples of what was done in many countries, but, comparatively speaking, a few years ago, on account of one unreasonable belief, we trust they will be, to those who read them, an inducement to persevere in the ennobling paths which reason, science, and a just conception of the laws of nature, are pointing out, as the only means by which the condition of mankind may be ameliorated, and the inhabitants of distant climes be more closely knit together in the endearing bonds of friendship.

The following stories, *given as facts*, may be found in the writings of Glanvil, More, Turner, and others, all of whom were not only men of learning, but held distinguished situations in England at the time they gave their works to the world.

“A relation was published, 1683, called, a narrative of the demon of Spraiton in the county of Devon: the relation thus, about the month of November last, in the said parish and county, one Francis Fey, (servant to Mr. Phil. Furle) being in a field near his master’s house, there appeared unto him in the resemblance of his master’s father, with a mole-staff in his hand, as he was wont to carry when living; the spectrum bid him not be afraid of him, but tell his master that several legacies bequeathed by him were unpaid, naming ten shillings apiece to two persons: the young man replied, that one of them was dead: the ghost answered, he knew that, but named the next relation: and ordered him likewise to carry twenty shillings to the sister of the deceased, living near Totness, and promised when he had performed these things to trouble him no further, and then left the young man; who took care to see the legacies satisfied, and carried the twenty shillings to the gentlewoman, but she refused it, being sent (as she said) from the Devil. The same night the spectrum appeared to him again; whereupon the young man challenged his promise, seeing he had performed all according to his appointment, but his sister would not receive the money: to which he replied, ’twas true; but withal, ordered the young man to ride to Totness and buy a ring of that value which she would receive; which being provided accordingly she took: and the young man was no further troubled.—It further tells, and that is it that I chiefly aimed at, that the former spectrum speaking to the young man of his second wife (who was also dead) called her wicked woman, though the relator knew her, and esteemed her a very good woman.

“Now the next day after the buying and delivering the ring, the young man riding home to his master’s house,

with the servant of the gentlewoman near Totness, and near the entrance of the parish of Spraitan, there appeared to be upon the horse behind the young man, a spectrum resembling the old gentleman's wife spoken of before. This demon often threw the young man off his horse, and threw him with great violence on the ground to the great astonishment of the gentlewoman's servant, and divers others that were spectators of the action. At his coming into his master's yard, the horse which the young man rid, tho' very poor, leaped at once twenty-five feet at one spring. Soon after the she spectrum showed herself to others in the house, viz., Mrs. Thomasin Gidly, Ann Langdon, and a little child, which they were forced to remove from the house: she appeared sometimes in her own shape, sometimes in forms very horrid, now and then like a monstrous dog, belching out fire. At another time it flew out of a window in the shape of a horse, carrying with it only one pane of glass, and a small piece of iron. One time the young man's head was thrust into a very strait place between the beds-head and a wall, and forced by the strength of divers men to be removed thence; who being much hurt, was advised to be bled, and the ligature of his arm was conveyed from thence about his middle, where it was strained with so much violence, that it had almost killed him, and being cut in sunder, it made a strange and dismal noise, so that the standers by were affrighted at it.

"At divers other times he hath been in danger to be strangled with cravats and neckcloths, which have been drawn so close, that with the sudden violence he hath near been choaked, and hardly escaped death. Another time one of his shooe-strings was observed (without the assistance of any hand) to come of its own accord out of his shooe, and fling itself on the other side of the room; the other was crawling after it, but a maid spying that, with her hand drew it out, and it strangely clasped and curled about her hand like a living eele or serpent. This is testified by a lady of considerable quality, too great for exception, who was an eye-witness.

“(To pass over many other phantastical freaks); when the young man was returning from his labour he was taken up by the skirt of his doublet by this female demon, and carried a height into the air; he was soon missed by his master and other servants then at labour, and after diligent enquiry, no news could be heard of him; until at length (near half an hour after) he was heard singing and whistling in a bog, where they found him in a kind of trance or extatick fit: when he returned again to himself, viz., about an hour after, he solemnly protested to them, that the demon had carried him so high, that his master’s house seemed to him to be but as a hay-cock; and that during all that time he was in perfect sense, and prayed to Almighty God not to suffer the Devil to destroy him; and that he was suddenly set down in that quagmire. The workmen found one shooe on one side of his master’s house, and the other on the other side, and in the morning espied his peruke hanging on the top of a tree; by which it appears that he was carried a considerable heighth, and that which he told them was no fiction. Extracted out of a letter from a person of quality in Devon, to a gentleman his friend in London, dated May 11, 1683.”

The following Irish story gives an account of one that had like to have been carried away by spirits, and of the ghost of a man who had been seven years dead that brought a medicine to the abovesaid parties’ bed-side.

“A gentleman in Ireland near to the Earl of Orrery’s seat, sending his butler one afternoon to buy cards; as he passed a field, he, to his wonder, espied a company of people sitting round a table, with a deal of good chear before them in the midst of the field. And he going up towards them, they all arose and saluted him, and desired him to sit down with them. But one of them whispered these words in his ear, Do nothing this company invites you to. He therefore refused to sit down at the table, and immediately the table and all that belonged to it were gone; and the company are now dancing and playing upon musical instruments, and the butler being desired to join himself to them; but he refusing this



also, they fall all to work, and he not being to be prevailed with to accompany them in working, any more than in feasting or dancing, they all disappeared, and the butler is now alone. But instead of going forwards, home he returns as fast as he could drive, in a great consternation of mind. And was no sooner entred his master's door, but down he falls, and lay some time senseless; but coming to himself again, he related to his master what had happened to him.

“The night following, there comes one of this company to his bed-side, and tells him, that if he offered to stir out of doors the next day, he would be carried away. Hereupon he kept within, but towards the evening, having need to make water, he adventured to put one foot over the threshold, several standing by. Which he had no sooner done, but they espied a rope cast about his middle, and the poor man was hurried away with great swiftness, they following after him as fast as they could, but could not overtake him. At length they espied a horseman coming towards them, and made signs to him to stop the man, whom he saw coming near him, and both the ends of the rope, but nobody drawing. When they met, he laid hold on one end of the rope, and immediately had a smart blow given him over his arm with the other end. But by this means the man was stopt, and the horseman brought him back with him.

“The Earl of Orrery hearing of these strange passages, sent to the master to desire him to send this man to his house, which he accordingly did. And the morning following, or quickly after, he told the earl, that his spectre had been with him again, and that that day he should most certainly be carried away, and that no endeavours should avail to the saving of him. Upon this he was kept in a large room, with a considerable number of persons to guard him, among whom was the famous stoker, Mr. Greatrix, who was a neighbour. There were, besides other persons of quality, two bishops in the house at the same time, who were consulted touching the making use of a medicine the spectre or ghost prescribed, of which

mention will be made anon, but they determined on the negative. But this by the by.

“Till part of the afternoon was spent all was quiet, but at length he was perceived to rise from the ground, whereupon Mr. Greatrix and another lusty man clapped their arms over his shoulders, one of them before him, and the other behind, and weighed him down with all their strength; but he was forcibly taken up from them, and they were too weak to keep their hold, for a considerable time he was carried in the air to and fro over their heads, several of the company still running under him to prevent his receiving any hurt if he should fall. At length he fell, and was caught before he came to ground, and had by that means no hurt.

“All being quiet till bed-time, my Lord ordered two of his servants to lie with him, and the next morning he told his Lordship, that his spectre was again with him, and brought a wooden dish with grey liquor in it, and bid him drink it off. At the first sight of the spectre, he said, he endeavoured to awake his bedfellows, but he told him that that endeavour shou’d be in vain, and that he had no cause to fear him, he being his friend, and he that at first gave him the good advice in the field, which had he not followed, he had been before now perfectly in the power of the company he saw there. He added, that he concluded it was impossible, but that he should have been carried away the day before, there being so strong a combination against him. But now he could assure him that there would be no more attempts of that nature, but he being troubled with two sorts of sad fits, he had brought that liquor to cure him of them, and bid him drink it. He peremptorily refusing, the spectre was angry, upbraided him with great disingenuity, but told him, that however he had a kindness for him, and that if he would take plantain juice he should be well of one sort of fits, but he should carry the other to his grave. The poor man having by this time somewhat recovered himself, ask’d the spectre, whether by the juice of plantain he meant that of the leaves or roots? It replied, the roots.

“Then it ask’d him, whether he did not know him?

He answered, no. He replied, I am such a one: the man answered, he hath been long dead. I have been dead, said the spectre or ghost, seven years, and you know that I lived a loose life. And ever since have I been hurried up and down in a restless condition with the company you saw, and shall be to the day of judgment. Then he proceeded to tell him, that had he acknowledged God in his ways, he had not suffered such severe things by their means. And farther said, you never prayed to God that day before you met with this company in the field, and also was then going about an unlawful business, and so vanish'd.

The foregoing story was sent from Mr. E. Fowler to Dr. H. More, concerning which he farther adds, by way of postscript, that Mr. Greatrix told this story to Mrs. Foxcraft at Ragley, and at her request he told it a second time in her hearing at the table. My Lady Roydon being then present, inquired afterwards concerning it of my Lord Orrery, who confirmed the truth of it, acknowledging all the circumstances of this narrative to my Lady Roydon to be true, except that passage, that the spectre told the man that he was that day going about an unlawful business. And Mr. Fowler farther adds, that since an eminent doctor in this city told me, that my Lord told him, that he saw at his own house a man taken up into the air.

Lastly, we find Dr. H. More in a letter to Mr. Glanvil, affirming that he also heard Mr. Greatrix tell the story at my Lord Conway's at Ragley, and that he particularly inquired of Mr. Greatrix about the man's being carried up into the air above men's heads in the room, and that he did expressly affirm that he was an eye-witness thereof.

Of a Dutchman that could see ghosts, and of the ghost he saw in the town of Woodbridge in Suffolk.

"Mr. Broom, the minister of Woodbridge in Suffolk, meeting one day, in a barber's shop in that town, a Dutch lieutenant (who was blown up with Opham, and taken alive out of the water, and carried alive to that town, where he was a prisoner at large) upon the occasion of some dis-

course was told by him, that he could see ghosts, and that he had seen divers. Mr. Broom rebuking him for talking so idly, he persisted in it very stiffly. Some days after lighting upon him again, he ask'd him whether he had seen any ghost since his coming to that town. To which he replied, No.

“But not long after this, as they were walking together up the town, he said to Mr. Broom, Yonder comes a ghost. He seeing nothing, ask'd him where about it was? The other said, it is over against such a house, and it walks looking upwards towards such a side, flinging one arm with a glove in its hand. He said, moreover, that when it came near them, they must give way to it. That he ever did so, and some that have not done so, have suffered for it. Anon he said, 'tis just upon us, let's out of the way. Mr. Broom believing all to be a fiction, as soon as he said these words, took hold of his arm, and kept him by force in the way. But as he held him, there came such a force against them, that he was flung into the middle of the street, and one of the palms of his hands, and one knee bruised and broken by the fall, which put him for a while to excessive pain.

“But spying the lieutenant lye like a dead man, he got up as soon as he could, and applyed himself to his relief. With the help of others, he got him into the next shop, where they poured strong-water down his throat, but for some time could discern no life in him. At length, what with the strong-water, and what with well chafing him he began to stir, and when he was come to himself, his first words were, I will shew you no more ghosts. Then he desired a pipe of tobacco, but Mr. Broom told him he should take it at his house; for he feared, should he take it so soon there, it would make him sick.

“Thereupon they went together to Mr. Broom's house, where they were no sooner entring in, but the bell rang out. Mr. Broom presently sent his maid to learn who was dead. She brought word that it was such an one, a taylor, who died suddenly, though he had been in a consumption a long time. And inquiring after the time of his death,

they found it was as punctually as it could be guessed at the very time when the ghost appeared. The ghost had exactly this taylor's known gait, who ordinarily went also with one arm swinging, and a glove in that hand, and looking on one side upwards.

This relation was sent to Dr. H. More from Mr. Edward Fowler; at the end whereof he writes, that Dr. Burton as well as himself, heard it from Mr. Broom's own mouth.

"The following story was related by James Sherring, concerning the matter at old Gast's house of Little-Burton, June 23, 1677, as follows.

The first night that I was there with Hugh Mellmore, and Edward Smith, they heard, as it were, the washing in water over their heads. Then taking a candle and going up the stairs, there was a wet cloath thrown at them, but it fell on the stairs. They going up farther, there was another thrown as before. And when they were come up into the chamber, there stood a bowl of water, some of it sprinkled over, and the water looked white, as if there had been soap used in it. The bowl just before was in the kitchen, and could not be carried up but through the room where they were. The next thing that they heard the same night was a terrible noise as if it had been a clap of thunder, and shortly after they heard a great scratching about the bedstead, and after that, great knocking with a hammer against the beds-head, so that the two maids that were in the bed cried out for help. Then they ran up the stairs, and there lay the hammer on the bed, and on the beds-head there were near a thousand prints of the hammer, which the violent strokes had made. The maids said, that they were scratch'd and pinch'd with a hand that was put into the bed, which had exceeding long nails. They said the hammer was lock'd up fast in the cupboard when they went to bed. This was that which was done the first night, with many other things of the like nature.

"The second night that James Sherring and Tho. Hil-

lary were there, James Sherring sat down in the chimney to fill a pipe of tobacco; he made use of the fire-tongs to take up a coal to light his pipe, and by and by the tongs were drawn up the stairs, and after they were up in the chamber, they were play'd withal (as many times men do) and then thrown down upon the bed. Although the tongs were so near him, he never perceived the going of them away. The same night one of the maids left her shoes by the fire, and they were carried up into the chamber, and the old man's brought down and set in their places. The same night there was a knife carried up into the chamber, and it did scratch and scrape the bed-head all the night, but when they went up into the chamber the knife was thrown into the loft. As they were going up the stairs there were things thrown at them, which were just before in the low room, and when they went down stairs, the old man's breeches were thrown down after them. These were the most remarkable things done that night, only there was continual knocking and pinching the maids, which was usually done every night.

"The third night, when James Sherring and Thomas Hillary were there, as soon as the people were gone to bed, their cloaths were taken and thrown at the candle and put out, and immediately after they cried with a very hideous cry, and said, they should be all choaked if they were not presently helped. Then they ran up the stairs and there were abundance of feathers plucked out of the bolster that lay under their heads, and some thrust into their mouths that they were almost choaked. The feathers were thrown all about the bed and room. They were plucked out at a hole no bigger than the top of one's little finger. Some time after they were vexed with a very hideous knocking at their heads as they lay on the bed. Then James Sherring and Thomas Hillary took the candle and went up stairs and stood at the beds-feet, and the knocking continued. Then they saw a hand with an arm-wrist hold the hammer which kept on knocking against the bed-stead. Then James Sherring going to-



wards the bed's-head, the hand and hammer fell down behind the bolster and could not be found. For they turned up the bed-cloaths to search for the hammer. But as soon as they went down the stairs the hammer was thrown out into the middle of the chamber. These were the most remarkable things that were done that night.

“ The fourth and fifth nights there was but little done more than knocking and scratching as was usually.

“ The sixth and seventh nights there was nothing at all, but as quiet as at other houses. These were all the nights that they were there.

“ The things that do follow are what James Sherring heard the people of the house report.

There was a saddle in the house of their uncle Warren's & Leigh, (which it should seem they detained wrongfully from the right owner) that as it did hang upon a pin in the entry would come off and come into the house, as they termed it, hop about the house from one place to another, and upon the table, and so to another, which stood on the other side of the house. Jane Gast and her kinswoman took this saddle and carried it to Leigh, and as they were going along in the broad common, there would be sticks and stones thrown at them, which made them very much afraid, and going near together, their whittles which were on their shoulders were knit together. They carried the saddle to the house which was old Warren's, and there left it, and returned home very quiet. But being gone to bed at night, the saddle was brought back from Leigh, (which is a mile and a half at least from old Gast's house) and thrown upon the bed where the maids lay. After that, the saddle was very troublesome to them, until they broke it in small pieces and threw it out into the highway.

“ There was a coat of the same party's, who was owner of the saddle, which did hang on the door in the hall, and it came off from the place and flew into the fire and lay some considerable time, before they could get it out. For it was as much as three of them could do to pluck it out of the fire, because of the ponderous weight that lay on it,

as they thought. Nevertheless there was no impression on it of the fire.

“Old Gast sat at dinner with a hat of this old Warren’s on his head, and there was something came and struck it off into the dish where his meat was.

“There was a pole which stood in the backside about fourteen or fifteen foot in length, which was brought into the house, and carried up into the chamber, and thrown on the bed; but all the wit they had could not get it out of the chamber, because of its length, until they took down a light of the window. They report that the things in the house were thrown about and broken to their great damage.

“One night there were two of this old Gast’s granddaughters in bed together, they were aged, one of them about twelve or thirteen years, and the other about sixteen or seventeen. They said, that they felt a hand in bed with them, which they bound up in the sheet, and took bed staves and beat it until it were as soft as wool, then they took a stone which lay in the chamber, about a quarter of an hundred weight, and put on it, and were quiet all the night. In the morning they found it as they left it the night before. Then the eldest of the maids swore that she would burn the Devil, and goes and fetches a fuz faggot to burn it, but when she came again, the stone was thrown away, and the cloath was found wet.

“There were many other things which are too long and tedious to write, it would take up a great deal of time.

“This which follows is the relation of Jone Winsor of Long Burton, she being there three nights, taken the third day of July, 1677.

“She heard or saw nothing as long as the candle did burn, but as soon as it was out, there was something which did seem to fall down by the bed-side, and by and by it began to lay on the bed’s-head with a staff, and did strike Jone Winsor on the head. She put forth her hand and caught it, but was not able to hold it fast. She got out of the bed to light a candle, and there was a great stone thrown

after her, but it missed her. When the candle was lighted, they arose and went down to the fire. One of them went up to fetch the bed-cloaths to make a bed by the fire, and there lay a heap of stones on the bed whereon they lay just before. As soon as the bed was made, and they laid down to take their rest, there was a scratching on the form that stood by them in an extreme manner. Then it came, and did heave up the bolster whereon they laid their heads, and did endeavour to throw them out. At last it got hold on one end of the pillow, and set it quite on end, and there it stood for some considerable time; at last falling down in its place, they fell fast asleep, and so continued all that night.

“The staff that was spoken of before was Jone Winsor’s, and she says, she left it below in the kitchen. She says, that which troubled, did endeavour to kill the people, if it had power. She put them to it, to know the reason why they were so troubled, and they said they knew nothing, unless it was about the business of old Warren. She was there three nights, and the trouble was much after the same manner, nothing that was more remarkable.

“This is the truth of what I heard them speak from their own mouths, and they will attest it if called thereunto.

“N.B. A very considerable story this is, and sufficiently circumstantiated for time and place, saving that the county is not named. The reason whereof I conceive to be, that it was in the very county in which Mr Glanvil lived, to whom the information was sent, namely, in Somersetshire. And there are Burtons more than one there, and also Leighs, but this Burton is determined by the space of something more than a mile and an half’s distance from Leigh. So that the topographical account is sufficiently exact. And the manner of the narrative is so simple, plain, and rural, that it prevents all suspicion of fraud or imposture in the relator.

“The transporting of things out of one room into another, and striking and the like by invisible agents, minds me of Mr. Lloyd’s story, as ’tis called in Mr. Glanvil’s

papers, whom in a letter he tells he may rely upon it for truth, as being sent from a person of quality and integrity in those parts. It is of a house haunted of one Walter Meyrick of the parish of Blethvaught, in the county of Radnor, some two and twenty years ago. Where, besides strange kind of tunable whistlings in the rooms, where none was seen to whistle, there were stones flung down out of a loft of great weight, the doors bolted or barred against them on the inside, when returned from the church, nobody being within. And at prayer at home when some of the women out of fear held one another by the arms, some invisible power would pluck asunder their arms, whether they would or no. By such an invisible force, one as he was sitting at supper, was struck flat to the ground, and a trencher struck out of the maid's hand that waited, and a smart box on the ear given to another, no visible thing being near that did it. A purse lost with two gold rings, and six and four-pence in it, the party complaining thereof, the purse dropp'd down from the top of the room, which had no room over it, and four-pence only in it. That men were struck down with stones, and yet had no great hurt, shews plainly they were not flung but carried. But there was one beaten with two staves black and blue, but none to be seen that thus be-laboured him, though in the day.

“ We pass by the frying pan, beaten with a little piece of iron, and tinkling over a man's head in the night, to his being struck down with a stick by day, while he tended the goose roasting, which that invisible striker seemed to have a plot upon, as also by his knocking a pickaxe against the lid of a coffer, to have a design upon a bag of money. These and the like feats, that narrative relates, which Mr. Glanvil calls Mr. Lloyd's story, who assures him he may rely on the truth thereof, he procuring it from a Justice of Peace, who took the parties' testimonies that dwelt in the house, or upon occasions were present there, and were eye-witnesses of the strange pranks that were plaid in the place. And there being that congeneracy betwixt James

Sherring's story and this, they mutually corroborate one another."

"The apparition of James Haddock, to Francis Taverner, near Drumbridge in Ireland, comprized in a letter of Thomas Alcock, to Dr. More.

"At Michaelmas, 1662, Francis Taverner, about 25 years old, a lusty proper stout fellow, then servant at large (afterwards porter) to the Lord Chichester, Earl of Donegal, at Belfast, in the north of Ireland, County of Antrim, and diocese of Connor, riding late in the night from Hillbrough homeward, near Drumbridge, his horse, tho' of good mettle, suddenly made a stand; and he supposing him to be taken with the staggers, alighted to blood him in the mouth, and presently mounted again. As he was setting forward, there seemed to pass by him two horsemen, though he could not hear the treading of their feet, which amazed him. Presently there appeared a third in a white coat, just at his elbow, in the likeness of James Haddock, formerly an inhabitant in Malone, where he died nearly five years before. Whereupon Taverner ask'd him in the name of God who he was? He replied, I am James Haddock, and you may call me to mind by this token; that about five years ago I and two other friends were at your father's house, and you, by your father's appointment, brought us some nuts, and therefore be not afraid, says the apparition. Whereupon Taverner remembering the circumstances, thought it might be Haddock; and those two who passed by before him, he thought to be his two friends with him, when he gave them nuts, and courageously ask'd him why he appeared to him rather than any other. He answered, because he was a man of more resolution than others; and if he would ride his way with him, he would acquaint him with a business he had to deliver to him. Which Taverner refused to do, and would go his own way, (for they were now at a quadrival) and so rode on homewards. But immediately on their departure there

arose a great wind, and withal he heard very hideous screeches and noises, to his great amazement; but riding forward as fast as he could, he at last heard the cocks crow, to his great comfort; he alighted off from his horse, and falling to prayer, desir'd God's assistance, and so got safe home.

"The night after, there appeared again to him the likeness of James Haddock, and bid him go to Elenor Welsh, (now the wife of Davis, living at Malone, but formerly the wife of the said James Haddock, by whom she had an only son, to whom the said James Haddock had by his will given a lease which he held of the Lord Chichester, of which the son was deprived by Davis, who had married his mother) and to ask her if her maiden name was not Elenor Welsh; and if it were, to tell her, that it was the will of her former husband, James Haddock, that their son should be righted in the lease. But Taverner, partly loath to gain the ill will of his neighbours, and partly thinking he should not be credited, but look'd on as deluded, long neglected to do this message, till having been every night for about a month's space haunted with this apparition in several forms, every night more and more terrible, (which was usually preceded by an unusual trembling over his whole body, and great change of countenance manifest to his wife, in whose presence frequently the apparition was, though not visible to her) at length he went to Malone, to Davis's wife, and ask'd whether her maiden name was not Elenor Welsh; if it was, he had something to say to her. She replied, there was another Elenor Welsh besides her. Hereupon Taverner returned without delivering his message. The same night, being fast asleep in his bed, (for the former apparitions were as he sat by the fire with his wife) by something pressing upon him he was awakened, and saw again the apparition of James Haddock in a white coat as at other times, who ask'd him if he had delivered his message? He answered he had been there with Elenor Welsh. Upon which the apparition, looking more plea-



santly upon him, bid him not be afraid, and so vanished in a flash of brightness.

“But some nights after (he having not delivered his message) he came again, and appeared in many formidable shapes, threatened to tear him in pieces if he did not do it. This made him leave his house where he dwelled in the mountains, and betake himself to the town of Belfast, where he sate up all night at one Pierce’s house, a shoemaker, accompanied with the said Pierce, and a servant or two of the Lord Chichester’s, who were desirous to see or hear the spirit. About midnight as they were all by the fireside they beheld Taverner’s countenance to change, and a trembling to fall on him, who presently espied the apparition in a room opposite to him where he sate, and took up the candle and went to it, and resolutely asked him in the name of God wherefore it haunted him? It replied, because he had not delivered the message, and withal threatened to tear him in pieces if he did not do it speedily; and so, changing itself into many prodigious shapes, it vanished in white like a ghost. Whereupon Francis Taverner became much dejected and troubled, and next day went to the Lord Chichester’s house, with tears in his eyes, related to some of the family the sadness of his condition. They told it to my lord’s chaplain, Mr. James South, who came presently to Taverner, and being acquainted of his whole story, advised him to go this present time to Malone to deliver punctually his message, and promised to go along with him. But first they went to Dr. Lewis Downs, then minister of Belfast, who upon hearing the relation of the whole matter, doubted at first of the truth of it, attributing it rather to melancholy than any thing of reality. But being afterwards fully satisfied of it, the only scruple remaining was, whether it might be lawful to go on such a business, not knowing whose errand it was; since, though it was a real apparition of some spirit, yet it was questionable whether of a good or a bad spirit. Yet the justice of the cause, (it being the common report the youth was wronged) and other considerations

prevailing, he went with them. So they three went to Davis's house, where the woman being desired to come to them, Taverner did effectually do his message, by telling her, that he could not be at quiet for the ghost of her former husband James Haddock, who threatened to tear him in pieces if he did not tell her she must right John Haddock her son by him, in a lease wherein she and Davis her now husband had wronged him. This done, he presently found great quietness in his mind, and thanking the gentlemen for their company, advice, and assistance, he departed thence to his brother's house at Drumbridge where, about two nights after, the aforesaid apparition came to him again, and more pleasantly than formerly, ask'd him if he had delivered his message? he answered, he had done it fully. It replied, that he must do the message to the executors also, that the business might be perfected. At this meeting Taverner asked the spirit if Davis would do him any hurt; to which it answered at first somewhat doubtfully; but at length threatened Davis if he attempted any thing to the injury of Taverner, and so vanished away in white.

“The day following, Dr. Jeremiah Taylor, bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, was to go to keep court at Dromore, and commanded me, who was then secretary to him, to write for Taverner to meet him there, which he did. And there in the presence of many he examined Taverner strictly in this strange scene of providence, as my lord styled it; and by the account given him both by Taverner, and others who knew Taverner, and much of the former particulars, his lordship was satisfied that the apparition was true and real; but said no more there to him, because at Hilbrough, three miles from thence on his way home, my lord was informed that my lady Conway and other persons of quality were come purposefully to hear his lordship examine the matter. So Taverner went with us to Hilbrough, and there to satisfy the curiosity of the fresh company, after asking many things anew, and some over again, my lord advised him the

next time the spirit appeared to ask him these questions. Whence are you? Are you a good or a bad spirit? Where is your abode? What station do you hold? How are you regimented in the other world? And what is the reason that you appear for the relief of your son in so small a matter, when so many widows and orphans are oppressed in the world, being defrauded of greater matters, and none, from thence, of their relations appear, as you do, to right them?

“That night Taverner was sent for to Lisburn, to my Lord Conway’s, three miles from Hilbrough, on his way home to Belfast, where he was again strictly examined in the presence of many good men and women of the afore-said matter, who was ordered to lie at my Lord Conway’s all night; and about nine or ten o’clock at night, standing by the fire-side with his brother and many others, his countenance changed, and he fell into a trembling, the usual prognostick of the apparition; and, being loath to make any disturbance in his lordship’s house, he and his brother went out into the court, where he saw the spirit coming over the wall, which approaching nearer ask’d him if he had done his message to the executor also? He replied he had, and wondered it should still haunt him. It reply’d, he need not fear, for it would do him no hurt, nor trouble him any more, but the executor, if he did not see the boy righted. Here his brother put him in mind to ask the spirit what the bishop bid him, which he did presently. But it gave him no answer, but crawled on its hands and feet over the wall again, and so vanished in white, with a most melodious harmony.

“Note, (1.) That Pierce, at whose house, and in whose presence, the apparition was, being ask’d whether he saw the spirit, said, he did not, but thought at that time he had a mist all over his eyes. (2.) What was then spoken to Taverner was in so low and hollow a voice, that they could not understand what it said. (3.) At Pierce’s house it stood just in the entry of a door; and as a maid passed by to go in at the door, Taverner saw it go aside

and give way to the maid, though she saw it not. (4.) That the lease was hereupon disposed on to the boy's use. (5.) The spirit at the last appearing at my Lord Conway's house, revealed somewhat to Taverner, which he would not discover to any of us that ask'd him.

"This Taverner, with all the persons and places mentioned in the story, I knew very well, and all wise and good men did believe it, especially the bishop, and dean of Connor, Dr. Rust, witness.

Your humble servant,

THOMAS ALCOCK.

"There is an odd story depending on this, which I cannot chuse but tell you. The boy's friends put the trustees and executor on this apparition's account into our courts, where it was pleasant to hear my lord talk to them on the whole matter. The uncle and trustee, one John Costler, forswore the thing, railed on Taverner, and made strange imprecations, and wish'd judgments might fall on him if he knew of any such lease; but the fear of the apparition's menaces by Taverner fear'd him into a promise of justice at least. About four or five years after, when my lord died, and the noise of the apparition was over, Costlet began again to threaten the boy with law, &c. But being drunk at Hill-hall by Lisburn, coming home he fell from his horse, and never spake more. This is a sad truth to my knowledge." T. A.

"A remarkable story touching the stirs made by a dæmon in the family of one Gilbert Campbel, by profession a weaver, in the old parish of Glenluce, in Galloway.

"It happened in October, 1654, that after one Alexander Agnew, a bold and sturdy beggar, who afterwards was hang'd at Dumfries, for blasphemy, had threatened hurt to Gilbert Campbel's family, because he had not gotten such an alms as he required; the said Gilbert was oftentimes hinder'd in the exercise of his calling, all his working instruments being, some of them broken, some of them cut, and yet could not know by what means this hurt was

done. Which piece of trouble did continue till about the middle of November; at which time the Devil came with new and extraordinary assaults, by throwing of stones in at doors and windows, and down through the chimney-head, which were of great quantity, and thrown with great force, yet by God's good providence there was not one person in the family hurt or suffered damage thereby. This piece of new and sore trouble, did necessitate Mr. Campbel to reveal that to the minister of the parish, and to some other neighbours and friends, which hitherto he had endur'd secretly. Yet notwithstanding this, his trouble was enlarged; for not long after he found oftentimes his warp and threads cut as with a pair of scissors, and the reed broken; and not only this, but their apparel cut after the same manner, even while they were wearing them, their coats, bonnets, hose, shoes, but could not discern how, or by what means. Only it pleased God to preserve their persons, that the least harm was not done. Yet in the night-time they wanted liberty to sleep, something coming and pulling their bed-cloaths and linens off them, and leaving their bodies naked.

Next, their chests and trunks were open'd, and all things in them strew'd here and there: likewise the parts of the working instruments that had escaped, were carried away, and hid in holes and bores of the house where hardly they could be found again: nay, whatever piece of cloth or household-stuff was in any part of the house, it was carried away, and so cut and abused, that the good man was necessitated with all haste and speed to remove, and to transport the rest to a neighbour's house, and he himself compelled to quit the exercise of his calling, whereby only he maintained his family. Yet he resolv'd to remain in the house for a season. During which time some persons thereabout, not very judicious, counsell'd him to send his children out of the family, here and there, (to try whom the trouble did most follow, assuring him that this trouble was not against all the family, but against some one person or other in it) whom he too willingly obey'd. Yet

for the space of four or five days after, there were no remarkable assaults as before.

The minister hearing thereof, shewed him the evil of such a course, and assured him, that, if he repented not, and call'd back his children, he might not expect that his trouble would end in a right way. The children that were nigh by, being called home, no trouble followed, till one of his sons, called Thomas, that was farthest off, came home. Then did the Devil begin afresh; for upon the Lord's day following, in the afternoon, the house was set on fire, but by his providence, and the help of some people going home from sermon, the fire was extinguish'd, and the house saved, not much loss being done. And the Monday after being spent in private prayer and fasting, the house was again set on fire upon the Tuesday, about nine of the clock in the morning; yet by providence, and the help of neighbours, it was saved before any harm was done.

Mr. Campbel being thus wearied and vexed, both in the day and in the night, went to the minister, desiring him to let his son Thomas abide with him for a time, who condescended, but withal assured him, that he would find himself deceived, and so it came to pass; for notwithstanding that the child was without the family, yet were they that remained in it sore troubled, both in the day-time, and in the night-season, so that they were forced to wake till midnight, and sometimes all the night over. During which time, the persons within the family suffered many losses, as the cutting of their cloaths, the throwing of peats, the pulling down of turf and seal from the roof and walls of the house, and the stealing of their apparel, and the pricking of their flesh and skin with pins. The presbytery having convened at the place for a solemn humiliation, persuaded Gilbert Campbel to call back his son Thomas, notwithstanding whatsoever hazard might follow. The boy returning home, affirmed, that he heard a voice speak to him, forbidding him to enter within the house, or into any other place where his father's calling was exer-



cised. Yet he entered, but was sore abused, till he was forced to return to the minister's house again.

Upon Monday the 12th of February, the rest of the family began to hear a voice speak to them, but could not well know from whence it came. Yet from evening till midnight, much vain discourse was kept up with the Devil, and many idle and impertinent questions proposed without that due fear of God that should have been upon their spirits under so rare and extraordinary a trial. The minister hearing of this, went to the house upon the Tuesday, being accompanied with some gentlemen, who, after prayer was ended, heard a voice speaking out of the ground, from under a bed, in the proper country dialect, saying, Would you know the witches of Glenluce, I will tell you them, and so related four or five persons' names, that went under an evil report. The said Gilbert informed the company, that one of them was dead long ago. The Devil answered, It is true, she is dead long ago, yet her spirit is living with us in the world. The minister reply'd, saying: The Lord rebuke thee, Satan, and put thee to silence, we are not to receive any information from thee, whatsoever fame any persons go under; thou art but seeking to seduce this family, for Satan's kingdom is not divided against itself.

After which, all went to prayer again; which being ended, (for during the time of prayer, no trouble was made) the Devil with many threatenings, boasted, and terrified the lad Thomas, who had come back that day with the minister, that if he did not depart out of the house, he would set all on fire. The minister answered, and said, The Lord will preserve the house and the boy too, seeing he is one of the family, and hath God's warrant to tarry in it. The Devil answered: He shall not get liberty to stay, he was once put out already, and shall not abide here, tho' I should pursue him to the end of the world. The minister reply'd, The Lord will stop thy malice against him.

And then they all prayed again, which being ended, the Devil said, Give me a spade and a shovel, and depart

from the house for 7 days, and I shall make a grave and lie down in it, and shall trouble you no more. The good-man answered, Not so much as a straw shall be given thee, through God's assistance, even tho' that would do it. The minister also added, God shall remove thee in due time. The Devil answered, I will not remove for you, I have my commission from Christ, to tarry and vex this family. The minister answered, A permission thou hast indeed, but God will stop it in due time. The Devil reply'd, I have (Mes John) a commission that perhaps will last longer than your own. After which the minister and the gentlemen arose, and went to the place where the voice seemed to come from, to try if they could find any thing. And after diligent search, nothing being found, the gentlemen began to say, we think this voice speaks out of the children, for some of them were in their beds. The Devil answered, You lie, God shall judge you for your lying, and I and my father will come and fetch you to hell with warlock thieves. And so the Devil discharg'd the gentlemen to speak any more ; saying, Let him speak that hath a commission, (meaning the minister) for he is the servant of God.

The gentlemen returning back with the minister, they sat down near to the place whence the voice seemed to come from, and then he spake to them after this manner, The Lord will rebuke this spirit in his own time, and cast it out. The Devil answering, said, It is written in the 9th of Mark, the disciples could not cast him out. The minister reply'd, what the disciples could not do, yet the Lord having heightened the parent's faith for his own glory, did cast him out, and so shall he thee. The Devil reply'd, It is written in the 4th of Luke, and he departed, and left him for a season. The minister said, The Lord in the days of his humiliation, not only got the victory over Satan in the assault in the wilderness, but when he came again his success was not better. For it is written, John 14, Behold the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. And being now in glory, will fulfil

his promise, and God shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. Rom. 16. The Devil answered, It is written, Mat. 25, There were ten virgins, five wise, and five foolish, and the bridegroom came, the foolish virgins had no oyl in their lamps, and they went unto the wise to seek oyl, and the wise said, go and buy for yourselves, and while they went the bridegroom came, and entered in, and the door was shut: and the foolish virgins were sent to hell-fire. The minister answer'd, The Lord knows the sincerity of his servants, and tho' there be sin and folly in us here, yet there is a fountain opened to the house of David, for sin and for uncleanness; and when he hath washed us there, and pardoned all our sins for his name's sake, he will cast the unclean spirit out of the land. The Devil answered, and said, that place of Scripture is written in the 13th of Zachariah, In that day I will cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land; but afterwards it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. The minister answer'd, Well are we that our blessed shepherd was smitten, and thereby hath bruised thy head; and albeit in the hour of his sufferings, his disciples forsook him, Mat. 26, yet now having ascended on high, he sits in glory, and is preserving, gathering in, and turning his hand upon his little ones, and will save his poor ones in this family, from thy malice.

The minister returning back a little, and standing upon the floor, the Devil said, I knew not these scriptures till my father taught me them. I am an evil spirit, and Satan is my father, and I am come to vex this house: and presently there appeared a naked hand and an arm from the elbow down, beating upon the floor, till the house did shake again, and also the Devil utter'd a most fearful and loud cry, saying, Come up father, come up, I will send my father among you. See there he is behind your backs. The minister said, I saw indeed an hand and arm when the stroak was given and heard. The Devil said to him, Saw you that, it was not my hand, it was my father's, my hand is more black in the loof.

Would you see me, put out the candle then, and I shall come in the house among you like fire-balls. After which, all went to prayer, during which time it did no harm, neither at any other time when God was worshipped. When prayer was ended, the Devil said, (Mēs John) if the good-man's son's prayers, at the college of Glascow, did not prevail more with God than yours, my father and I had wrought a mischief here ere now. To which one of the gentlemen reply'd, though a check had been given him before, Well, well, I see you confess there is a God, and that prayer prevails with him, and therefore we must pray to God, and will commit the event to him. To which the Devil reply'd, You, sir, you speak of prayer with your broad-lipt hat, (for the gentleman had lately gotten a new hat in the fashion, with broad lips) I will bring a pair of sheers from my father that shall clip the lips of it a little.

The night now being far spent, it was thought fit every one should withdraw to his own home. Then did the Devil cry out fearfully, Let not the minister go home, I shall burn the house if he go. And many other ways did he threaten. And after the minister was gone forth, the good-man being instant with him to tarry; whereupon he returned, all the rest of the company going home. Then said the Devil to the minister, You have done my bidding. Not thine, answer'd he, but in obedience to God have I returned, to bear this man company, whom thou dost afflict. Then did the minister call upon the name of God; and when prayer was ended, he discharged Mr. Campbel, and all the persons of the family from opening their mouths in one word to the evil spirit; and when it spake, that they should only kneel down and speak to God. The Devil then roared mightily, and cryed out, What, will ye not speak to me, I shall burn the house, I shall strike the bairns, and do all manner of mischief. But after that time no answer was made to it, and so for a long time no speech was heard. After this, the said Gilbert suffer'd much loss, and had many sad nights, not

two nights in one week free, and thus it continued till April; from April to July he had some respite and ease. But after he was molested with new assaults, and even their victuals were so abused, that the family was in hazard of starving, and that, which they did eat, gave them not the ordinary satisfaction they were wont to find.

“In this sore and sad affliction, Mr. Campbel resolv’d to make his address to the synod of presbyters, for advice and counsel what to do, which was appointed to convene in October, 1655, namely, whether to forsake the house and place, or not. The synod by their committee, appointed to meet at Glenluce in Feb. 1656, thought fit that a solemn humiliation should be kept through all the bounds of the synod, and amongst other causes, to request God in behalf of that poor afflicted family; which being carefully done, the event was, through the prayers of his people, that his trouble grew less till April, and from April to August he was altogether free. About which time the Devil began with new assaults, and taking the ready meat that was in the house, did sometimes hide it in holes by the door-posts, and at other times did hide it under the beds, and sometimes among the bed-cloaths, and under the linens, and at last did carry it quite away, till nothing was left there, save bread and water to live by. After this he exercised his malice and cruelty against all the persons in the family, in wearying them in the night-time, with stirring and moving through the house, so that they had no rest for noise, which continued all the month of August, after this manner. After which time the Devil grew yet worse, and began with terrible roarings and terrifying voices, so that no person could sleep in the house in the night-time; and sometimes did vex them with casting of stones, striking them with staves on their beds, in the night-time; and upon the 18th of September, about midnight, he cried out with a loud voice, I shall burn the house, and about 3 or 4 nights after, he set one of the beds on fire, which was soon extinguished without any prejudice, except the bed itself, and so he continued to vex them.

“ This narrative I have in a manner transcribed verbatim, out of the miscellaneous observations of Mr G. Sinclair, which are added to his treatise of hydrostaticks; which nothing but the certainty of the truth thereof, and usefulness for the refuting of Sadducism, could have tempted him to insert, it being an observation so heterogeneous to all the rest. And therefore I thought it worth the while to reduce it into its more proper place, himself acknowledging it to be something an unsuitable piece to the contexture of the rest of his book, but that he put it in, only to convince the incredulous world of the existence of spirits, whose being he conceives it does more than probably evince, that is to say, demonstratively, supposing it true. Which that it is, the narrative itself seems sufficiently to make good, the stirs there made being so long, and so publick, and so repeatedly, and the things writ by Mr. Campbel’s own son, who knew them exactly, and I have heard the truth of the story averr’d with all assurance myself by some of that country. And the narration is so simple and plain, and without design, (it being rather a colluctation of Mes John and the presbytery on one side, and the foul fiend with his black loofs assisted by Satan and his Father on the other side, than any clear victory) that that ought to gain believe thereto. Not to add, that the very abruptness of its ending shews it to be fresh writ, while the thing was doing, and that mere matter of fact was the measure of the writer’s pen.

“ I will conclude all, with the information of Dr. G. Burnet, that able and impartial writer of the history of the reformation in England, who upon my enquiry told me this, that he living in Glascow some years, found all people there, and in the country about, fully persuaded of the truth of matter of fact, and that he never heard any thing objected to Mr Sinclair’s relation, but that it was too short, whereas all the passages of that apparition would make a volume, and that there was a full relation thereof, attested under the hands of eye-witnesses : and to be short, I have greater assurance of the truth of this story



than I think fit to declare. The most remarkable passage in the whole narrative, is the naked arm from the elbow downwards, appearing by itself, without any other parts of any visible person, as the shape of an horse's hoof in the first story, without any other parts of an horse. Which puts me in mind of the apparition Elkerken, which Wierus makes mention of in his *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, that used to haunt the highway in an heathy place not far from Embrica, in the duchy of Cleve, in the lower Germany nothing was seen but a mere hand, which would beat travellers as they passed that way, pull them off their horses, and overthrow carriages."

Such are a few specimens of the stories that were palmed upon our fathers for truths, by men who should have known better. Bacon had written his *Novum Organum*, Sir Isaac Newton had given his *Principia* to the world, ere William Turner, M.A., had compiled his huge folio volume, which abounds with stories of a similar, or even worse description, than those which we have taken the liberty to lay before our readers. We may flatter ourselves, that we live in an age which has consigned all such absurdities to the tomb of all the Capulets; but ere we boast of our intelligence, let us look around, and inquire if there are not still among us, many who labour under the fear of ghosts and apparitions. We know individuals, who, rather than pass alone by a grave yard at the *witching* time of night, would go a considerable way about, to shun such a neighbourhood. These very persons will, doubtless, in the face of open day, express their disbelief in supernatural appearances, but the legends which they listened to in their youth, have still such a hold on their imaginations, that their fears get the better of their judgments, and portray, amid the lonely trees which in many places decorate our country church yards, phantoms which owe their existence to the idle terrors generated in their own over-heated fancies. Nor is our country altogether purified from the absurdities which disgraced the reigns of the latter Stewarts. Counter charms are still practised in

many parts of the country, for the purpose of rendering innocuous the premeditated malice of witches. In Strath-spey and many other places in the Highlands it is, or very lately was, the practice, when a person's cattle were not in a thriving condition, or did not yield their usual quantity of milk, to extinguish all the fires in a certain district, and after a given time had elapsed, to rekindle them by friction. To have borrowed fire from a neighbouring part of the country, would have rendered the counter charm of no avail; of course they were obliged to rub two pieces of well dried wood together till they ignited. In some places they keep a wheel for the purpose, which is driven round with such rapidity that fire is soon produced, and from this newly generated fire are all the chimneys in the district relighted. If they are unsuccessful in their endeavours to restore the cattle to their wonted health, or if they still refuse to yield their owners their usual quantity of milk, other methods are had recourse to, which common sense will tell us must be equally inefficient. They put a quantity of milk into a pot, along with a live trout, and a considerable number of pins. The pot is then put upon the fire, and the poor trout is literally boiled alive. It is asserted by the ignorant boors who practise the above charm, that while the pot continues to boil, the pins penetrate the heart of the witch, and keep her in the most excruciating tortures, as long as the charm remains upon the cattle. The pain proceeding from the pins, however, becomes so unbearable that she is soon forced to remove the charm, and immediately her torments cease. How many methods the ignorant among us have of defeating the machinations of the Devil!

The Lee Penny is another witch superstition which has survived to our day. It was alluded to as early as the year 1629, when "Isobel Young in East Barns was accused of having stopped by enchantment George Sandie's mill twenty-nine years before; of having prevented his boat from catching fish while all the other boats at the herring-drave, or herring fishery were successful; and that

she was the cause of his failing in his circumstances, and of nothing prospering with him in the world : that she threatened mischief against one Kerse, who thereupon lost the power of his leg and arm : that she entertained several witches in her house, one of whom went out at the roof in likeness of a cat, and then resumed her own shape : that she took a disease off her husband, laid it under the barn floor, and transferred it to his nephew, who when he came into the barn saw the firlof hopping up and down the floor : that she used the following charm to preserve herself and her cattle from an infectious distemper, viz., to bury a white ox and a cat alive, throwing in a quantity of salt along with them : that she had the Devil's mark, &c.

“ Mr. Laurence Macgill and Mr. David Primrose appeared as counsel for the prisoner. They pleaded, that the mill might have stopped, the boat caught no fish, and the man not prospered in the world, from natural causes ; and it was not libelled by what spells she had accomplished them ; that, as to the man who had lost the power of his leg and arm, first, she never had the least acquaintance with him ; secondly, she offered to prove that he was lame previous to the threatening expressions which she was said to have used : that the charge of laying a disease under a barn floor was a ridiculous fable, taken probably from a similar story in Ariosto ; and that two years had elapsed between her husband's illness and his nephew's : that what the prosecutor called the Devil's mark, was nothing else than the scar of an old ulcer ; and that the charge of her burying the white ox and the cat, was false.

“ The celebrated Sir Thomas Hope, who was counsel for the prosecution, replied, that these defences ought to be repelled, and no proof allowed of them, because contrary to the libel ; that is to say, in other words, because what was urged by the prisoner in her defences contradicted what was charged by the public prosecutor in his indictment. The defences for the prisoner were overruled. — Is it needful for me to add that she was convicted, strangled, and burned ? ”

Hugo Arnot, in recording this trial, gives in a note, the following account of the famous Lee penny.

“In this trial mention is made of the proprietor of the cattle having applied to Lockhart of Lee for the use of his curing stane to cure the cattle, and that he graciously condescended to give them some water in which it had been dipped; and the water having (I suppose) derived virtue from the stone, as the Pool of Bethsaida from the angel, the cattle were thought to be a good deal the better.—This famous instrument of superstition has maintained its reputation for many centuries. It is said to have been brought home by Lockhart of Lee, who accompanied the Earl of Douglas in carrying King Robert the Bruce’s heart to the Holy Land. It is called the Lee Penny. Besides its curing of cattle, it has another virtue, that it can never be lost. It is still in the possession of that ancient family; and people from various parts of Scotland, and even of England, whose cattle were infected, have made application within these few years for water in which the stane had been dipped.”

We do not wish to be understood, as inferring, that the superstitions of the present day are of as gross a nature as those that existed in the days of our fathers. We do not imagine that it would enter the heads of the present generation to burn a quadruped for magic, and such things have been done in the *good* olden time! In the Elizabethan age, one Bankes had a horse, which has been celebrated by Shakspeare, Johnson, Donne, Hall, Taylor, Sir Hinelm Digby, and Sir Walter Raleigh. The name of this wonderful horse was Morocco, and was first shown in London in the year 1589, where in addition to his usual accomplishments of telling the number of pence in a silver coin, and the number of points in throws of the dice, he filled the town with wonder by going to the top of St. Paul’s. The fame of Bankes’ horse led his master to visit the continent, but he was unfortunate in this step. At Orleans, the horse and his master were brought under suspicion of magic, and to the utter disgrace of the times,

poor Bankes and his "fine cut" were put to death at Rome, as Johnson quaintly says, "being, beyond seas, burned for one witch."

The superstition of the existence and re-appearance of ghosts, like its weird sisters, the witches, together with the phantom demons of darkness, are now being rapidly chased from the realities of existence, and the thousand miseries which flowed from a belief in unproved and unknown beings, like the mountain mists, are vanishing before the light of the sun of science. Mankind are now astonished that such superstitions should ever have gained credit in the world, and that such brutal ignorance and cold-blooded villany should have had it in their power to shed so much innocent blood. It is a notorious fact that in the British dominions alone not less than 30,000 miserable victims were tortured and burnt for this imaginary offence. This reckless waste of human life was pursued with an ardour disgraceful to the age in which it occurred, and the most foul and horrid enormities were openly committed by a class of men whose better information must have convinced them of the murders they were designedly and coolly perpetrating. The terrible flame of fanaticism was fanned into existence by those whose duty it was to disseminate knowledge, and to proclaim "peace and good will to man." At Salem, in New England, where so many murders were committed on persons whose characters were acknowledged to be morally blameless, the accusations originated in the house of a priest, and were chiefly carried on by that class of men; they were not only the first instigators, but were accessory to the murder of nineteen innocent victims, one of whom was pressed to death because he would not plead to the indictment. The clergy of Paisley, and neighbouring parishes, gave countenance to the murder of seven individuals in that place in 1697, and sanctified their horrid deeds by the observance of a solemn fast. At the torturing and burning which took place at Irvine in 1613, where three persons were sacrificed, the Earl of Eglinton, and the ministers of Ayr, Kilmarnock,

Dalry, and Irvine, presided on the occasion, and sanctioned the shedding of innocent blood. Where were the humanity and learning of these men? Did they appear on these occasions for the purpose of softening the asperities of the human character, and by their influence and example restraining the vindictive and evil dispositions of those whose feet were "swift to shed blood?" No; they appeared for the purpose of aiding and abetting the perpetrators of the foul deeds, and of giving sanction to the commission of crime of the deepest dye. But these days are past, and though a brighter sun has arisen on our moral horizon, we are yet deeply under the influence of laws enacted at that time, and which have been handed down to us unaltered and unimproved.

Our criminal laws have ever been esteemed of the most vindictive and cruel character; nor has any attempt, till lately, been made to soften their severity; and as it is but natural to suppose that a people will square their lives according to the laws by which they are governed, so, those who are unhappily born under a sanguinary code of laws, will be more cruel in their dispositions, than they who are governed by laws of a milder nature.

We have mentioned a circumstance that occurred in Stevenson, in Ayrshire, in the memory of the present generation, where an old woman was cruelly injured by an individual, who imagined that she had been the means of preventing his cow from yielding her usual quantity of milk. We shall state another case that occurred in the same county, at a later period, which was told us by an eye-witness, a gentleman of veracity, who was personally acquainted with the individuals who committed the crime, and with the helpless sufferer who was the object of their unhallowed persecution. The following notice of this disgraceful affair was kindly handed to us by the individual who witnessed the transaction, and we shall let him tell the story in his own words. "In the parish of Colmonel, Ayrshire, about forty years ago, there lived two old women, who bore the hated character of being witches.



Every thing that occurred in the country side of a seemingly mysterious nature, was imputed to one or other of these two poor old women, whose powers of working mischief, in the opinion of their neighbours, extended to the injuring of the cattle of those against whom they bore a grudge. To relate all the stories that were current in the district where they lived, about their mischief-making, would fill a volume, but I will content myself with one, which, if you think it of sufficient interest, you are welcome to insert among your other examples of modern beliefs in witchcrafts.

“A man of the name of Eaglesham that lived near the sea shore, had a son who was by profession a dancing-master. The young man fell sick, and it was supposed by the more intelligent portion of his neighbours, that his illness proceeded from over-exertion. He vomited a considerable quantity of blood, and was for some time in a rather delirious state. The young man's father suspected that one of the old women I have alluded to, named Elizabeth M'Whirter, had bewitched him, and under that impression crossed the hills which separated his house from the old woman's, who lived on the banks of the Stinchar, a distance of three miles, and with the assistance of two neighbours that he brought along with him, compelled the old woman, much against her inclination, to accompany him to his house. When they arrived there, she was forced to kneel at the diseased young man's bed side, and repeat the Lord's prayer. After she had concluded, the father took a rusty nail that he had provided for the purpose, and with it cut on her old and withered brow, the figure of the cross so effectually, that it was many weeks in healing!” Thus far our informant, who has often told us, that he has seen the aged sufferer, long after the diabolical occurrence took place, with the wound upon her forehead, unhealed.

In a former part of this work, we have given an account of a conversation that took place at a later period, with Mr. Lee, farmer, Stanley, and a drover in the same district that the above occurrence took place—a certain proof

that the scandalous belief in Witchcraft has still its votaries in our own day. It may therefore reasonably be asked, Are there not men of education in these parts, set apart to enlighten the minds of those who have not an opportunity of inquiring into the fallacies of such beliefs? There are. Every parish in Scotland has its minister, who is handsomely paid for the express purpose of teaching the people what is truth, and what is error. Those ministers are ever ready to affirm that superstition and religion are antipodes to each other; and yet within many of their parishes the beliefs which led our fathers to commit such wicked acts have still a being. The clergymen of Scotland, as a body, are possibly as exemplary a class of men, as are to be found in any part of the world: drunkenness, profanity, and licentiousness have ever found in them an inexorable foe; but these are vices which generally affect only the individuals who practise them. It is not so with superstition; the innocent individual, whose mind soars above the fooleries of ignorance, may be pointed at and shunned by his superstitious neighbours, because, forsooth, his ways are not as their ways, nor his opinions as their opinions. Not content with doing every thing in their power to blight his character, they give out that he is holding communication with the arch enemy of mankind; and though our laws do not recognise, in our day, such a crime, the misfortunes of a whole district are commonly attributed to the guiltless individual. Is it not, therefore, the bounden duty of every minister to root out of the minds of his hearers every vestige of such a belief? The inveterate drunkard and fornicator are justly denied the church privileges which their better behaved neighbours enjoy; and if the same punishment was dealt to those who believe in Witchcraft, and practise counter charms, to undo its effects, there cannot be a doubt, but that in a very few years the nuisance would altogether disappear from our land. Our ministers have it their power to do so, and if they do not make the attempt, they are failing in the duty which their situation requires of them.

It is well known, that in Ireland the law which gave

judges the power to condemn persons to the stake for Witchcraft, was in full force so late as the year 1821. It was abrogated that year; and the reason that led to its abrogation, was a prosecution that was instituted in the year 1817, against an old woman for Witchcraft. The judge, in his charge to the jury, earnestly recommended, in the most forcible terms he was master of, to return a verdict of Not Guilty, which the jury complied with. There cannot be a doubt but that the government of the country was totally ignorant of such a law being in force, till the trial we have alluded to brought it to light; and, to its honour be it spoken, it lost no time in erasing the disgraceful law from our statute books. :

The story we have just related, goes far of itself, to prove that there are still among us many who cling with a death-like tenacity to the blood-thirsty superstition which makes the better informed of the present generation turn with disgust from the sickening scenes which the page of history too often presents us with. There cannot be a doubt, but that many of the old woman's neighbours would be disappointed, in not witnessing the burning of a witch, and would, in all probability, impute the judge's recommendation to the jury, to his ignorance, and that if he had understood Witchcraft as well as he should have done, his address to the jury would have had very contrary effects. That we are right in our conjecture, may be inferred by her being brought to trial at all. She must have had accusers, and believing witnesses would be brought forward to substantiate the accusation. Both accusers and witnesses would be believers in her guilt, and the evidence brought forward, would doubtless be of the same character as the evidence which, in other years, had sent so many of our fellow creatures to a painful and ignominious death. The judge was well aware of the wickedness of the indictment, and would certainly feel indignant that such a case had been brought before a court of justice; but as the laws against Witchcraft had not then been rescinded, he had no other alternative, but to let the trial go

on, and reserve to himself the liberty to impress on the minds of the jury the ridiculousness of the whole affair. The trial had one good effect; it was the means of bringing the subject before the legislature of the country, who soon put it out of the power of any cruel-hearted and ignorant wretches so to pester a judge again.

Let us now attend for a little to what was done in Scotland at a still later period, and it will show to the world, at a glance, whether the schoolmaster is *abroad* or at *home* among us. The case to which we are going to direct the attention of our readers, did not go before a court of justice, but it does not the less affect the character of our peasantry, as rational and intelligent beings, and leaves us no room to boast over our less fortunate neighbours and fellow subjects, the Irish. The story which we refer to, is an account of a method which an individual took, to restore one of his cows to health, by means of a charm, which he described to our informants, who happened to be travelling in the neighbourhood of his dwelling. So late as the year 1836, a few gentlemen left Paisley, for the purpose of visiting the justly celebrated clachan, or Campsie Glen. On their way, they fell in with a countryman, with whom they entered into conversation. Being of a communicative disposition, he told them he had been at Milugavie, consulting with a person who was skilled in Witch matters, what method he should take to undo the effects of Witchcraft, which one of his cows had been labouring under for some time back. The individual who had the presumption to pretend to the power of counteracting the deeds of the Devil, or his emissaries, told the simpleton to gather a certain quantity of herbs which he named, and hang part of them over the cow's head, and infuse the remainder among its meat, and his cow would be speedily restored to its wonted health and usefulness. He had succeeded in collecting the herbs, which he had carefully wrapped in a napkin; and when our informant desired a sight of them, he replied, that he durst not comply with their wishes, or the counter-charm would lose

its effect; "but," continued the wiseacre, "if ye'll gang wi' me into the fields, I'll show you plenty o' the same sort, for they're by nae means scarce." One of the party happening to treat the matter rather cavalierly, the man with the *bundle of charms* allowed the conversation to drop, much to the disappointment of the rest, who expected to have heard a lengthened description of Witchcraft as it is practised in modern times.

It will hardly be credited that the above occurrence took place within a few miles of Glasgow within these three years, and in a district where the means of information is within the reach of every individual who chooses to apply for it, and yet, the respectability of the party who communicated the anecdote, puts it beyond the reach of doubt. Where, then, is our boasted intelligence, which we as a nation claim, on account of our parish churches, and our parish schools? On the contrary, ignorance and its effects are still rampant among us, and science has much to do, ere the weeds which are so deeply rooted in the minds of men can be displaced, to make room for the invigorating productions of common sense, and of reason.

Who has not heard of some hunter or other, who, after wounding a hare, and following it into a neighbouring field, found an old woman sitting, torn and bleeding, at the back of the fence which he had just crossed? The old woman, of course, must have been the hare; but some how or other, in these cases, the old women took good care never to change their shapes in the presence of their pursuers. The Devil, it seems, never forsook them in these emergencies: he kept that part of his art a profound secret from the uninitiated. The following story will, we hope, be considered a good illustration of the changes which a hare *can* undergo, and with it we shall conclude this section. It was related by a gentleman, now deceased, whose scientific acquirements made his name universally known in the west of Scotland, and whose amiableness of disposition, and goodness of heart, endeared him to all who had the

honour of his acquaintance—we mean the late Dr. Reid, lecturer on astronomy, and other branches of mathematical science, in Glasgow. The worthy doctor happening to be at a friend's house in the country, on a visit with a select party, their host proposed that they should take a day's amusement in the fields for the purpose of bringing home a hare or two. The party were overjoyed at the proposal, and next morningsallied out in high spirits to join the chase. They soon discovered what they took to be a hare, and gave chase accordingly. They had a long run, but at last they succeeded in securing the animal, not one of the party doubting for a moment but that it actually was a hare. The supposed hare was brought home, and put into the hands of the cook, who, like the rest, considered it a hare; and as he had orders to get it prepared in his best manner for the next day's dinner, he lost no time in taking the hide from it. Time, however, who waits on neither hares, witches, nor men, hurried on; to-morrow came, and in its train the dinner hour. The cook had bestowed all his culinary art on what he still looked on as a fine hare, and when the party were setdown to dinner, he placed the dish which contained it on the table, smoking, luscious, rich. Up to this moment not a doubt had entered the head of any of the individuals in the company, about the reality of what the dish contained being a hare, but some how or other one of the dining room windows had been left open, and "what do you think," the doctor would exclaim, "did this supposed hare do?" The company to whom he related the story were so filled with wonder and astonishment, that they had not the power to utter a word in reply to his question, when he, taking advantage of their silence, put an end to their suspense, by exclaiming, "why, it lay as peaceably in the dish as any hare could do, till it was taken out to be eaten"!!



## SECTION VIII.

## SUPERSTITIONS CONTINUED.

AMONG the many superstitions with which the minds of men have been embued, the greater part may be traced more or less directly to the severe and unphilosophical doctrines instituted as points of belief in the various systems of heathen mythology, and have, as it were, grown out of the very terrors they were meant to suppress. Superstition has ever held a mysterious power over men's actions, and few, even at the present day, can positively assert that they are entirely free from its baneful influence. We find superstitions mingling in the most common affairs of life, and though unacknowledged, they are yet observed with the most scrupulous attention, which shows the powerful influence they still maintain over the minds even of the more intelligent classes of men. At the hour of birth we are ushered into an atmosphere of superstitious prejudice,—our bridal path is traced through its many windings, and we are laid in the grave, like a hunted fugitive, with all the formulæ of long-established and deep-rooted superstitions.

Free inquiry, which alone can break down the barriers of superstition, has hitherto been obstructed by the influence of prevailing creeds, and bigotry and intolerance owe their triumph over truth, altogether to the supineness of philosophers in exposing error, and confronting popular prejudice. Superstition has too long been supported by acquiescence; and men who pretend to love truth have too long succumbed to falsehood, because it was fashionable, and trusted to improvement, which their influence and example were the mean of retarding. But it is time that truth should triumph over error, and that science should take the place of fallacious creeds. The real lover of truth will have sympathy with the devotion of ignorance,

and will pity with generous regret the uninformed slave of superstition, but he will not pity learned bigotry nor endowed intolerance. The withered witch, the attenuated spectre, and the grim ghost, were retained in the service of Satan as long as they had a leg to stand upon, and the priesthood, instead of informing the vulgar of their error, took every means in their power to continue their existence, and asserted, preached and practised, that the rack was the fittest engine of conviction, and the stake the most effectual cure for unbelief. Was Newton so engrossed with the splendour of the machinery of heaven, that he bestowed not a thought upon the human mind? Was Bacon so intent upon the framework of his inductive philosophy, that he could not apply its principles in tracing false superstition to its true cause? Was the profound Bolinbroke so abstracted in his philosophy that he could not spare one effort of his mighty mind, nor bestow one thought upon the fallacies of human nature? Yet these great and powerful men were contemporary with those who thought it no disgrace to call in the art of juggling, artifice, and imposture, to support their absurd dogmas, and for the glory of God burnt old women for witches, and superannuated men for infidels and heretics. How can we account for this apathy in enlightened men, otherwise than by supposing that they submitted with passive obedience to the most flagrant abuses of power, because it did not immediately affect them as individuals, or because it was dangerous to beard the lion in his den? But the present age is remarkable for the freedom and boldness of its inquiry. We now see that truth needs not the crutches which systems and creeds have manufactured for its support. Truth is invincible, and of its own stalwart strength can not only defend itself, but pour contempt on the legions that offer battle under the banner of error. It is base in man to persecute opinion, but it is noble in man to maintain this right, and to resist the encroachments of unjust oppression. The strong arm of moral energy is the only weapon necessary

to be wielded in defence of truth, and is found to be the only means necessary to eradicate prejudice and superstition even from its strongholds. Why, then, have our respectable and intelligent clergy been so remiss in this, the most important part of their duty? They have much in their power, and occupy an elevated position in the scale of usefulness. It is not their place to tamper with the selfish passions of men, but to address the higher powers of their moral and intellectual natures.—It is theirs to address the highest combination of sentiment that comes within the range of human nature;—to command the pure tear of elevated humanity to flow, and to give a kindlier and a sweeter tone even to the purest thoughts of man. The plenitude of their influence is not to be measured by the woe, but by the well-being of the human race.—It is their part to mellow the stroke of justice with the hand of mercy;—to blend the frown of fear with the smile of hope, and to swell the solemn tone of veneration, with the harmony of benevolence. It must then be unbecoming in them who assume the splendid elevation of leading mankind onward in the ways of wisdom, to acquiesce with unmeaning prejudices, or to sanction and give countenance to superstitions, whose foundations are laid in palpable error. However trifling they may at first appear, they yet singly add their sum of injury and of evil, to the gross amount of misery that flows from ignorance, and the exposure even of the least paves the way, in a greater or lesser degree, for the total annihilation of the whole. Then will man see clearly the relation in which he stands to surrounding nature, to himself, and to his God. He will then discover that the light of revelation is reflected from the bosom of science, and that science has its foundation in immutable truth. It will then be known, that there is no more virtue in a horse's shoe than its weight of old iron, and that the spilling of salt upon the table, is only indicative of shattered nerves, and a disposition to paralytic affection.

The superstitions to which we are now about to advert,

still hold a place, if not in the belief of their virtue, at least in their casual, and in many cases in their punctual observance. Of this description is the virtue attached to the horse's shoe, to which we have just referred. The virtue ascribed to it is of very ancient date, and the cause at first assigned for its especial service as a security against the attacks of evil spirits, is now lost among the rubbish of past ages. Not a doubt however remains, that whatever may have been the cause, its virtues for many ages seem to have been universally acknowledged, and in many parts at the present day it still holds a high place among the amulets for the averting of misfortune, and protecting the individual from the malignity of witches, and of securing a successful issue to any hazardous enterprise or speculation.

Some have ascribed the virtue of the horse shoe to the rule of contraries, and suppose it to have been first used as an amulet in virtue of the undivided hoof to which it was once attached, in contradistinction to the cloven foot which forms one of the distinctive marks by which to discover the Devil, who, whatever shape he may assume, cannot conceal or disguise the cloven foot, the barbed tail, and the assinine ears; others have assigned its virtue to its rude resemblance to the halo or rays of glory, which in ancient pictures the painters have made to surround the heads of saints and of angels; but others, with more propriety, assign its virtues to purification by fire. This latter supposition receives some countenance from the method resorted to for the cure of horses that had become vicious, or afflicted by any distemper which village farriery did not understand. Such diseases were invariably attributed to Witchcraft, and the mode of cure seems to imply the belief that the imperfect purification, by fire, of the shoes which the animal wore, had afforded an inlet to malevolent influences. In order to effect a cure, the horse was led into the smithy, the doors of which were closed and barred, and being placed in a proper position, had the shoes taken from its feet, and placed in the fire, till they

assumed a red heat ; during which process, the witch or wizard was supposed to suffer the most excruciating torture, and compelled, when under its influence, to remove the spell under which the animal suffered.

That the efficacy of the fire constituted a part of the virtue inherent in the horse shoe, is further proved, by the manner in which it is used for reclaiming witched milk, that is, by first submitting it to a red heat, and, unknowingly to the person carrying the pail, suddenly plunging it into the milk contained in it.

The horse shoe, even at this day, is frequently seen attached to the threshold of doors, especially those of cow-houses, as a security against the entrance of a Witch. A modern author enumerated seventeen horse shoes on the steps of doors, in one of the streets of London, in 1813 ; and a celebrated distiller of whisky in the Highlands of Scotland continues to keep a horse shoe in each of his utensils used in the process of distillation.

In the rude ages man not only sought to avert existing evil, by the use of amulets, charms, &c., but he endeavoured to purchase favour, or to extenuate guilt, by a propitiatory offering to supernatural powers. The divinities of the ancients being endowed with passions similar to those who worshipped them, were supposed to be gratified by offerings suitable to the depraved taste of their respective votaries. It is impossible, at this remote period, to trace the origin of many of the superstitions which still exist, and which, though now innocently acquiesced in, had at one time a powerful hold upon the minds of men, and were religiously observed ; or to estimate the value of the sacrifice, measured by the zeal of their adoration, the depth of their contrition, or the extent of their fears. As we have already said, divinities were represented in the human form, as occupied by inclinations, passions, and pursuits resembling those of mankind. If they were to be honoured, it was by an offering of what was esteemed most valuable ; if they were to be propitiated for benefits desired, or their wrath appeased for offences committed, then were living creatures immolated in sanguinary sacrifices, and human

victims tortured, in circumstances marked with all the atrocities of the darkest superstition, and varying in degree, from the inflicting of voluntary wounds for the purpose merely of shedding blood or offering portions of the living flesh by excision, to that of murdering the helpless victim, as propitiations to appease the wrath of an offended deity.

Many of the ceremonies practised at the present day, seem unquestionably the decayed remains of former cruelties, modified by the many changes which the social state is continually undergoing. It has been generally admitted, that the relics of human sacrifice are indicated by ceremonies observed in Scotland, at Beltien, the festival of a pagan divinity. But whether, in relation to that most barbarous of superstitious rites, this be a sound opinion, it is indisputable that analogies to a propitiatory offering for the safety of animals were practised in latter times, precisely at the period corresponding to the same festival. It is at that time that the Highland herdsman prepares an oaten cake, with nine square knobs on the surface. Each of these, dedicated to a conservative or to a destructive being, is broke off and thrown over the shoulder, with an invocation for protection of the herds.

Another ceremony of late observance at Beltien, is worthy of more special notice:—When the Highland youths cast a trench in some sequestered spot among the hills, a fire is kindled, and a cake is made, and cut in pieces, one of which is blackened, and put into a bonnet along with the rest. Each of the youths present draw forth a portion, and he, to whose lot the blackened portion chances to fall, is held as “devoted to beal-tine, or Baal’s fire, as a sacrifice,” and must leap three times through the fire, that has been employed for the ceremony. These exhibit to us, in distinct language, the remains of superstitious rites, now reduced to meagre fragments, and remain only to perpetuate the indistinct memorials of sacrifices made by our forefathers, in the true spirit of devotional worship.

The relics of symbolic sacrifice are preserved in another



form, in various places. After an infant, newly baptised, is carried home from church, the midwife, or another, waves it through the flame, repeating thrice, "Let the fire consume thee now or never." In some parishes of Scotland it is customary to put the child upon a cloth, spread over a basket containing provisions, and to carry it thrice round the crook of the chimney, thus preserving the proximity of the fire, and virtually doing homage to the divinity of Baal, and although the practice of human immolation has become repugnant to a juster sense of the divine attributes, and the warmer feelings of love and mercy are maintained to our fellow creatures, yet mankind keeps the superstition alive, by leaping over fires, or passing through them, and by other ceremonies, wherein this element forms the chief ingredient of the superstition. This sanguinary ritual seems to have been founded on the law of retaliation, and, consequently, must have existed at a very early date, and seems to have been in the very zenith of power and influence in the times of Moses and Aaron. Under the Mosaic dispensation, retaliation was the law of the land, and the right of revenge was vested on the nearest of kin to the injured party. Life for life was the measure of retribution, and demanded a personal or vicarious atonement. But as mankind progressed in moral improvement, the sacrifice of life was commuted to an oblation of portions of the body—to libations of blood, and at last wounds or lacerations were gradually substituted and deemed sufficient without the destruction of the victim, and parts deemed the least useful to the human frame were substituted as an offering even for life itself. Among the ruder tribes now occupying various continental and insular territories, mutilation of the fingers of either hand, from different superstitious motives, is still frequent. Thomson the traveller mentions a case which came under his observation of a mother having lost all her previous offspring, and sought to preserve a son, the next born, by mutilating his little finger of a joint; thus evidently substituting a part for the whole.

In the darker period of this superstition the capricious master and the cruel victor procured their victims from their slaves and captives, and the altars, raised as trophies of war, were stained with the best blood of the vanquished; but as man became more civilised, he became also more just, and more merciful, and the human victim gave place to oblations less sanguinary and less revolting. The slaughter of mankind by strangling, or burying, or burning alive, to propitiate divinities, declined to milder substitutes, and became more of a symbolical or typical description. The images of mankind were burned, submerged, or destroyed, when the exaction of life ceased to be indispensable for gratifying sanguinary deities.

In cases, however, where malevolence or ambition induced the wicked to speculate on the destruction of their nearest relatives, if the nefarious purpose could not be perpetrated by overt acts, they did not hesitate to resort to clandestine effects of mystical agency. The following case of this description we give, from Dalyell's "Darker Superstitions of Scotland." Robert Monro, of Foulis, had been twice married; first to a daughter of the family of Ogilvie, of Finlater; secondly, to Catherine, a daughter of the family of Ross, of Balnagowan. Issue sprung of both marriages, consisting of two sons, Robert and Hector of the former, and a son George of the latter. In the year 1577, the destruction of the eldest son, Robert, was devised by his step-mother Catherine, who invited the assistance of some that were thought accomplished in the art. But the plot being discovered, the conspirator fled to a neighbouring county, until the intercession of the Earl of Caithness with her husband, permitted her return. Robert, the senior, is said to have died in 1588, and Robert, the elder son, in the year following. He was succeeded by his younger brother, Hector, who resorted to the aid of sorcerers for his own preservation. Marion M'Ingarath being applied to for this purpose, administered three draughts of water, wherein three stones had been infused. After long consultation with her, she declared there was

no remedy, unless the principal man of his blood should suffer death for him; who, on further discussion, was found to be George Monro, half brother of Hector. In prosecuting their occult treason, the parties arranged that no one should enter the house of Hector, previous to the arrival of George Monro, the devoted victim—that after he came, Hector, presenting his own left hand, should take him by the right, but without uttering a word until the devoted should break silence.

An hour after midnight, the sorceress, with an accomplice, quitted Hector, her patient, and reaching a certain spot, pertaining to two coterminous overlands near the sea flood, they removed the turf, and dug a grave to receive him. The remainder of the ceremony is explained in the indictment served upon Hector and his step-mother and accomplices, from which we give the following extract, which refers to Hector:—"They patt you in a paire of blanketts, and carried you furth to the said graif: and they were all commandit to be dum, and never to speak ane word, unto the time that scho (Marion M'Ingarrath) and your foster-mother should first speak with your maister, the Devil: and being brocht furth, was laid in the said graif, and the grene eird quhilk was cuttit wes laid abone, and haldin down with stalles, the said witch being besyde you: and the said Cristiane Niell, your foster-mother, was commandit to ryn the breid of nyne rigis, and in her hand Neill younger, Hector Leithis sone,—and how sone the said Cristiane had run the breid of nyne rigis, scho came again to the graif quhair ye wes lyand, and inquirit at the said, quhilk wes hir schois, quho answerit that the said Mr. Hector was hir schois to leif, and your brother George to die for you: and this form wes vsit thryis that nicht. And thairefter ye wes cariet hame, all the companie beand dum, and wes put to your bed."

This is one of the most remarkable cases recorded in Scottish history, and shows to what an extent this horrible superstition was carried, even by what are termed the better classes of society. The whole tenor of the ceremony

was calculated to make a deep and thrilling impression upon all concerned. The solemn hour, so near when night and morning meet—the semblance of funeral rites—the place selected—the mystical numbers—the mysterious silence, and above all, the avowed deadly purpose—warrant the strongest presumption, that it comprised relics of symbolic sacrifice, or of something substituted for actual immolation of the human species.

We are not informed whether George was aware of the diabolical proceedings against his life; if so, it must have seriously affected him, and have made a strong and fearful impression upon his mind, and been the mean of promoting, if not altogether accomplishing the fulfilment of the dreadful purpose. The devoted victim was seized with a mortal distemper in April 1590, of which he died in the following June.

The parties concerned were brought to trial for Witchcraft, when Hector and his stepmother were acquitted, and Christian Ross Malcumsone, and Thomas M'Kane, M'Allan, M'Enoch, suffered capital punishment. Marion M'Ingarrath was examined before the king as “ane rank and notorious witch,” but her fate is not known.

This transferring of disease from one individual to another, and from mankind to brutes, is of very ancient date, and is by many believed in, at the present day, particularly in Ireland, and the burying and burning of live animals, for this purpose, has been very recently had recourse to.

It is to be observed, however, that this practice is not so much to be considered a propitiatory sacrifice as the result of a vulgar belief, that through the operation of necromantic means disease may be transferred from one person to another. This seems to be evident from the following extract from the indictment of Marion Richart. ‘Ye (Marion Richart) cam to Stronsay, and asking alms of Andro Coupar, skipper of ane bark, he said, ‘Away witch, carling; devil ane farthing ye will fall!’ Quhair-vpon ye went away very offendit: and incontinently, he going to sea, the bark being under sail, he rane wode, and

his son seeing him gat him in his armes, and held him, quhairvpon the seikness immediately left him, and his sone rane mad; and Thomas Paterson seeing him tak his madness and the father to turn weill, ane dog being in the bark, took the dog and bladdit him upon the twa schoulderis, and thairefter flang the said dog in the sea, quhairby these in the bark were saiffed."

The destruction of brute animals for propitiatory or sacrificial offerings still exists to a considerable extent, and though its origin and purpose is now but little known, the practice is nevertheless continued. The sacrifice of the first fruits, and the immolation of the first born, may be traced to the most remote antiquity, and so universal was the custom, that the priests soon discovered in it one of the most lucrative sources of riches and aggrandisement, and consequently monopolised the right of sacrifice to themselves, and insisted not only on the firstlings, but on the best of the flock.

The relics of these sacrificial offerings are still preserved, with this difference that the diseased and the lame are generally preferred, and a dying animal is destroyed, that some benefit may be imparted to the rest of the flock; the conservation of the herd being dependent on the superstitious oblation of a part for a whole. In the trial of John Brughe in 1643, for charming, the end to be attained by the sacrifice is distinctly stated. Many cattle having died, John Brughe and Neane Nikclerith, also one of the initiated, conjoined their mutual skill for the safety of the herd. The surviving animals were driven past a tub of water containing two enchanted stones; and each was sprinkled by the liquid contents in its course. One however being unable to walk, "was by force drawn out at the byre dure: and the said Johnne and Nikclerith smelling the nose thereof, said it would not live, caused ane hole to be made in Maw Greane, the cow was put quick in the hole, and all the rest of the cattle made thereafter, to go over that place: and in that devillische manner by charming they *were cured.*"

During the later years of Queen Elizabeth, the same opinion was entertained of the benefit to ensue from burying or burning one of a herd to save the rest. An owner having lost many of his cattle, threw the carcass of the next that died into a pit, and consumed it with faggots. The same absurd prejudice animates many of the peasantry, particularly those of Ireland, at the present day. Even in the commercial districts of Scotland, which more than any other country has laid aside her superstitious prejudices, individuals are still living, who through the medium of a living sacrifice sought to propitiate or appease some sanguinary deity, or to invoke the assistance or protection of some tutelary genius. For this purpose the modern sportsman "opens the moors" by the destruction of some animated being, which is nailed by the feet to the stable door to ensure success to the sports of the field, and to propitiate a favourable result to the dangers of the chase.

Hence also the origin of the prejudice against preserving kittens produced in May, and, without regard to circumstances, indiscriminately destroying the first brood. In the parish of Mearns, Renfrewshire, several instances of destroying live animals have recently occurred. One individual, in order to propitiate a favourable issue to the produce of his cows, buried his first calves, which happened to be twins, beneath the door of the cow-house, so that the other cows might be under the necessity of passing over the bodies of the victims as a charm against Witchcraft, and a preservation from sickness, disease, and death.

The same barbarous expedients were had recourse to, for the relief of human maladies, and may be traced to the same class of oblations.

Thomas Greave, who was tried in 1623, is stated to have cured a sick woman by the following means. He ordered "ane grit fyre to be put on, and to make ane hoill in the north side of the house, and ane quik (live) hen to be put furth thairat at three severall tymes, and tane in at the house dur widderschynes (contrary to the course of the sun,) and taking the hen and putting it under the seek



woman's okstir (armpit) or arme; and thairefter carrying it to the fyre quhair it was hadin down and brunt quik thairin."

The destruction of life as a redeeming sacrifice to obtain relief from suffering, or as a remedy for disease, is yet had recourse to for children infected with worms. A quantity of the common garden worm is collected and tied into a cloth bag, and then cruelly submitted to a painful and lingering death, by exposure to the influence of a slow fire, by which they are gradually roasted alive; their decomposed remains are then applied as a salve to the belly of the child, in the fullest assurance of effecting a cure as wonderful as that of removing the paroxysm of a fever by the burning of a live hen.

The various forms of oblation—the barbarous and sanguinary mode of destroying the victim—the rude magnificence of the altar—the awful solitude of the situation chosen for the sacrifice, and the mysterious mummerly of the officiating priest, lead the mind involuntarily back to times of the deepest ignorance and the darkest superstition.

The worship of our terror-stricken progenitors was not the result of a pious gratitude to a being whom they were taught to revere and to love, but a blind and trembling submission to an infernal power, whose wrath was only to be appeased by the shedding of blood, and whose favour was to be purchased only by the groans of the dying victim. So deeply were their minds embued with the horrid realities of sanguinary sacrifice, and so deep-rooted were their superstitions, that their customs and habits descended to their posterity as heirlooms, and in many districts, even at the present time, the fires of Baal are lighted at their appointed time, and the symbol of sacrifice is observed in form less destructive, but not less sincere. The youth dances around the bonfire, and the clown causes his cow to pass through a blazing wisp of straw, to preserve them from contagious distempers during the subsequent year.

Of late years our ears have been tingled with the wel-

come sound of improvement, and isolated examples of virtue and of integrity are found even in the circles proverbial for their support of existing evils, and their hostility to national refinement. But the superstitions of the vulgar, instead of being rooted out, have been cherished, and like rank weeds have been allowed to remain, and to mingle with the fairest flowers of the garden of science.

Prejudice yet stands in the way of improvement, and error is still found to oppose the triumph of truth. Endowed learning and hereditary wisdom have yet to learn, that ignorance is not the mother of rational devotion, that bigotry is not the offspring of true religion, and that intolerance is the declared enemy of both. The opposite of these opinions has been carried to its limits, and a reaction of mind, like a mighty river, is flowing onward, and burying in its deepening bosom the artificial distinctions of caste and condition. Superstition in her grosser forms is passing away, and the lingering relics of pagan idolatry which yet remain are lengthening into shadows, and will soon disappear.

Among other superstitions those relating to marriage, though falling into dissuetude, and in many cases attended to as mere matter of form, still continue to hold a place in our affections, and are more or less attended to in proportion to the intelligence of the individuals who are the subjects of the ceremony. Marriage has been defined to be a sacred union of man and woman, indissoluble, but by the death of one of the parties, and different nations have each of them formed their own laws respecting it, and involved them more or less in the superstitious rituals of their respective systems of religion; the Jews, for example, look back with painful feelings to the destruction of Jerusalem their favourite city, and indulge in the fond hope that they may yet possess the land of their fathers, and worship their God on Zion's holy hill. In order to keep alive the debasing sentiment of being strangers and aliens in a foreign land, and to bring to serious remembrance, even in the moment of swelling mirth, and of unlimited joy, their

stubborn disobedience to the warnings of the prophet, and the just judgments of an offended God; the bride and bridegroom after receiving from the Rabbi the benediction on the consummation of their plighted vows, receive from his hands a vessel filled with wine, which tasted, the bridegroom takes the vessel with its remaining contents, and dashes it with violence on the ground, in remembrance of the destruction of the holy city, and after having ashes strewed on their heads in remembrance of the burning of the temple, the bride and bridegroom with their respective retinues, accompanied with music, retire under a canopy where they are saluted by all present with the benediction—"Blessed be he that cometh." The bridegroom walks three times round his bride, and takes her by the hand, when the company throw corn upon the wedded pair, emblematical of the abundance of their native land, and propitiatory for a speedy return to that land, whose fulness they yet hope to enjoy. The religious part of the ceremony being concluded, the married couple are led to a banquet where the bride is presented with an egg and a dressed hen, the one emblematical of a numerous progeny, and the other of love of offspring, industry, and attachment to home; the egg, which is raw, is thrown in the face of some one who is selected for the butt of the company, and the hen, after being tasted by the bride, is thrown among the guests who scramble for it, and whoever gets the greatest share is reputed the most fortunate; then are the temple and Jerusalem forgotten in the feast that follows, and the revelry continues with music and dancing till the wine, like the red sea, is dried up, and the children of Israel have each passed over to their place.

Christian countries derive many of their marriage customs from those of the Pagans. In Poland, the bride is made to go three times round the fire, emblematical of the ancient sacrifice to Baal or Moloch; her feet is then washed, and the bed and all the other furniture are sprinkled with the water, as a substitute for the blood of the victim. The bride's mouth is then anointed with honey, after

which she is led with her eyes veiled to all the doors of the house, which she must strike with her right foot; the guests then throw wheat, rye, and other kinds of grain at the doors, indicative of the plenty that is to be always at her command, so long as she is obedient and devout in her religious observances.

In Scotland, the marriage ceremony seems at one time to have been conducted with more than ordinary attention to religious formulæ, and in many places, at the present time, it has a strong resemblance to pagan institutions, mixed up with the superstitions of more modern times. Such is the constitution of the human mind, that it delights to outrun time itself, and to pry into futurity, for the purpose of ascertaining who the future husband or wife may be, and whether the union may be one of love or aversion. For the purpose of obtaining information on these important subjects, recourse is had to the midnight spell, and in solitude and silence the future spouse is expected to retard the progress of unwinding a clue, or in the form of an apparition to reflect her image in the polished mirror, showing to the individual the lineaments of the wished for lover who is to be the future partner of life, and to partake of all a parent's pleasures and a parent's pains.

For the purpose of discovering whether a future husband or wife will prove kind or otherwise, a more direct appeal is made to the heathen deities by resorting to the ordeal of fire, and substituting nuts instead of a living sacrifice. When recourse was had to the living sacrifice, an augury was found in the curling of the smoke, the colour and form of the flame, and the positions which the victims assumed when writhing in the agonies of death. So is the case in the modified sacrifice of nuts: if they burn clear and bright, it augurs well of the individual upon whose account the sacrifice is made, or if smoky and starting from each other, it augurs ill of their future destiny. In catholic districts, it is usual for the person anxious to discover whether or not his suit may be acceptable, to make two crosses of wood, which are laid in water outside of the

house. The querent goes round to the opposite side of the house, and throws a shoe over in the direction where the crosses are laid: if the tread or point of the shoe be inclined towards the cross, it is a good omen that the lover will be successful, but if the heel of the shoe be next the cross, as if it were receding from it, the hopes of the lover are reversed.

Nuptials being agreed upon by the parties, it was next a matter of high importance, that the contract should be for their mutual benefit. For this purpose, the greatest attention was paid to the times and seasons when the ceremony of marriage should be performed. In all seasons it was considered inauspicious to marry when the moon was in the wane. Good fortune was supposed to depend so much upon the increase of that luminary, that nothing important was undertaken after it had passed the second quarter. It was considered auspicious to marry at full moon, and more so if that occurrence happened upon a Friday.

There are few, however, that venture to tie the nuptial knot under the influence of a May moon: at the present day the records of session show to what extent this superstition is still carried. The month of May is nearly barren of records of intended marriages, and so ancient is that custom, that no satisfactory elucidation can now be given of its origin. It is a question whether or not the heathen deities, Venus and Juno (to the former of whom the month of April is consecrated, and to the latter the month of June,) be not the primary cause of this obvious neglect of the most lovely month of the year.

The custom of presenting the ring on marriage occasions, is also involved in the obscurity of antiquity, but the reason of placing it upon the fourth finger of the left hand, is in accordance with the opinions of the early philosophers, who supposed the heart to be the seat of good and evil intentions, and that a vein communicated from the heart to that finger.

It was also essential that the ring should be an entire circle: if this was broken by the insertion of a diamond or

otherwise, it betokened evil, because it augured that the reciprocal regard of the parties might not be perpetual or without end.

A number of the superstitions respecting marriage are evidently derived from the Witchcraft of modern times. In many parts of Scotland it is customary, after the ceremony of marriage has been performed, to carry the bride to her apartment, on the crossed hands (king's cushion) of two of her maids, to prevent communication of her feet with the earth, lest Satan or his emissaries should interfere and disappoint the expectation of a future heir; for the same reason the bridegroom places a coin of silver in his shoe, which, like the bride's cake, is made the subject of scramble by the wedding guests. As a further security against the malignity of Witchcraft, and as an antidote to sterility, he carries a quantity of salt in his pocket; this, with the careful untying of all the knots connected with the clothing of the bride, gave defiance to the Devil, and bound the witches over to keep the peace, and (provided the bride had not been married in a green gown,) prevented the fairies from stealing away their future progeny.

Marriage being a divine institution has, consequently, been watched over by the church with the greatest anxiety; feasting and merriment were its usual accompaniments, and disorder and licentiousness often the results. Specific ordinances of the General Assembly were frequently passed, enjoining the performance of such ceremonies "in decent and sober manner," restricting the number of friends on either side to four, besides relations. It was even considered necessary to repress the impatience of widows for again entering into the bonds of matrimony inconsiderate and rash; for this purpose, it was enacted by this Assembly, in 1645, "That in respect, that sundrie women desyres the benefeit of maraidge a little efter thair husband's death, therfor intimatione to be maid nixt Lord's day that non have the benefeit of maraidge quill neir thrie quarteries passe efter thair husbandis deathe."



## ADDENDA.

The following account was written by Dr Walter Young, Minister of Erskine, M. A. F. R. S., Edinburgh, in 1792, extracted from his Statistical Account of the Parish of Erskine.

“One of the last trials for Witchcraft, which happened in Scotland, had its origin in this parish in 1696-7. The person supposed to have been bewitched, or tormented by the agency of evil spirits, or of those who were in compact with them, was Christian Shaw, daughter of John Shaw of Bargarran, then about eleven years of age. A short account of this trial may be seen in Arnot's Collection of Criminal Trials.

“Three men and four women were condemned to death, as guilty of the crime of Witchcraft, and were executed at Paisley.\* A particular account or journal of the extraordinary circumstances of this case was drawn up at the time when it happened: every paragraph of which is affirmed to have been originally subscribed by witnesses, among whom we find the names of almost all the noblemen and gentlemen, and many of the ministers of the neighbourhood. The narrative was afterwards printed† without these subscriptions, along with a very pious and decently written preface, by the publisher. There were subjoined to it the attestations of a physician and surgeon, the judicial confessions of some of the persons accused of Witchcraft, and an abstract of the plead-

\* They were first hanged for a few minutes, and then cut down and put into a fire prepared for them, into which a barrel of tar was put, in order to consume them more quickly.

† In the year 1698, by James Watson, Edinburgh, and entitled, “True Narrative of the Sufferings and Relief of a young girl,” &c.

ings of the advocates on the part of the crown, and of their charge to the jury. These last, in their reasonings upon the nature of the evidence, and the credibility of the facts, and in the answers to objections, discover much learning and ability. A few copies of the original publication are still extant, and a new edition of it was, a few years ago, printed in Paisley.\* It may furnish ample matter of speculation to those whose object it is to trace the progress and variation of manners and opinions among men. The subsequent history of this lady is, however, more interesting to the political inquirer.

“Having acquired a remarkable dexterity in spinning fine yarn, she conceived the idea of manufacturing it into thread. Her first attempts in this way were necessarily on a small scale. She executed almost every part of the process with her own hands, and bleached her materials on a large slate placed in one of the windows of the house. She succeeded, however, so well in these essays as to have sufficient encouragement to go on, and to take the assistance of her younger sisters and neighbours. The then Lady Blantyre carried a parcel of her thread to Bath, and disposed of it advantageously to some manufacturers of lace, and this was, probably, the first thread made in Scotland that had crossed the Tweed. About this time, a person who was connected with the family, happening to be in Holland, found means to learn the secrets of the thread manufacture, which was then carried on to a great extent in that country, particularly the art of sorting and numbering the threads of different sizes, and packing them up for sale, and the construction and management of the twisting and twining machines. This knowledge he communicated on his return to his friends in Bargarran, and by means of it they were enabled to conduct their manufacture with more regularity, and to a greater extent. The young women in the neighbourhood were taught to spin fine yarn, twining mills were erected, correspondencies

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\* By Alexander Weir in 1775.

were established, and a profitable business was carried on. Bargarran thread became extensively known, and, being ascertained by a stamp, bore a good price. From the instructions of the family of Bargarran, a few families in the neighbourhood engaged in the same business, and continued it for a number of years. It was not to be expected, however, that a manufacture of that kind could be confined to so small a district, or would be allowed to remain in so few hands for a great length of time. The secrets of the business were gradually divulged by apprentices and assistants. A Mr. Pollock in Paisley availed himself of these communications, and laid the foundation of the well established manufacture of thread, which has ever since been carried on in that town. From that time the women in this neighbourhood have continued to practise the spinning of fine yarn, which they disposed of to the Paisley manufacturers."

"Christian Shaw was married to a Mr Miller, the parish minister of Kilmaurs, about the year 1718. The following quotation from Mr. Alex. Millar's statistical account of the parish of Kilmaurs speaks of Christian Shaw's husband. 'A disposition to secede from the established church hath long subsisted among the inhabitants of Kilmaurs: and this disposition was first excited by the following circumstance. About the year 1712, Mr. Hugh Thomson, then minister of this parish, demitted, upon the expectation of being called to Stewarton, but was somehow disappointed; and either his pride would not permit him to solicit a re-admission, or a majority of the people, disobliged with his giving them up, refused it. He retired to a small property of his own in the parish, and on sabbaths preached sometimes at his own fire-side, and sometimes from a tent in the fields, to as many of his friends as would hear him. Five or six years elapsed before another minister was elected; during which time Mr. Thomson had frequent opportunities of reconciling himself to many of his former congregation. After Mr. Miller was chosen and ordained, Mr. Thomson still continued

to preach in his own barn, or in the fields, to as many as were willing to hear him. Inconstancy, which always attends the multitude, disposed some to go one way and some another; directed by humour, local convenience, or the influence of one upon another, they attended sometimes Mr. Miller, at other times Mr Thomson.'

"Christian Shaw's husband came to pay his friends a visit at Bargarran, sometime before the year 1725, when he took badly and died there, and was buried in Erskine church. He was universally lamented by his parishioners, great numbers of whom attended his funeral. After his death Christian Shaw and her family came and resided in Bargarran. Mr. Semple in his history of Renfrew says, 'About the year 1725, the making of white stitching thread was introduced into the west country by Mrs. Miller of Bargarran, who, very much to her own honour, imported a twist or thread miln, and other necessary utensils from Holland, and carried on a small manufacture in her own family.' The editor saw on the 10th May 1809, a William Jamieson, an old man, who told him that he had wrought three years and a half, on the original thread miln at Bargarran, that he came to Bargarran in the year 1743, and at that time none of the family of Bargarran was alive, but old Mrs. Shaw, Jean Shaw, (the old sister,) and Mr. Fergusson her husband, who was factor to Lord Blantyre."

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"Mr Robert Wodrow, minister at Eastwood, in his History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, from the Restoration to the Revolution, vol. 1., appendix to book 2d. No. 11th, in William Sutherland's declaration and examination, there is mention made of a person being executed for a witch about the year 1661. William Sutherland says, 'I being come of poor parents in Strathnaver, (the wildest part of the North Highlands) who were not able to keep me, I was hired with a master who sent me to bring back a horse that Colonel Morgan's party had

taken from him; which party I followed till the enemy fell betwixt me and home, and being afraid to go back, and having a desire to learn the Lowland tongue I came amongst in a sad condition with the said party, till I came to Spey side, where I herded cattle for a year in the parish of Boharm, at a place called the New kirk; from thence I came to the parish of Fyvie in Buchan, where I herded cattle for another year; from that place I came to the bridge of Stirling, where I followed the same employment a third year, which was the year the king came home; (1660) and from thence I came to Paisley, where, after herding cattle a fourth year, I fell in extreme want, and that by the reason the master whom I served being owing to one of the bailies, called John Weres, the bailie seized upon my master's goods, so that he ran away, and I lost my fee, and was engaged by the counsel of some honest men, from that scripture, 'suffer not a witch to live,' to execute a witch, and to cleanse chimney-heads, whereby I gained somewhat for livelihood; and having a mind to learn to read, I bought a question book, but finding the people there to fear at my company, so that none would give me a lesson, I came from Paisley to Irvine, about five years since,' &c. that is five years before 1666, which makes it to be 1661, the time he was in Paisley.

"Mr Burn, in the chronological part of his English dictionary, under the article Paisley, says, that five women were burned there for Witchcraft, anno 1667. Hugo Arnot also remarks, that for some time after the Restoration, the records of privy council are in a manner engrossed with commissions to take trial of witches. There is an instance of the council, at one sederunt, granting fourteen separate commissions to take trial of witches.\*

The editors having heard that the genealogical tree of the Cochrans of Clippens, near Linwood, contained some account of a witch case, made application to Mr. George Crow, gardener there, for the purpose of ascertaining if

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\* Records of Privy Council, November 7, 1631, January 23, 1662.

there was any possibility of seeing it. Fortunately, he had taken an exact copy of the tree, which he, in the kindest manner, put into their hands, and from which they extracted the following account of Stephen Cochran, who, as the tree asserts, was confined in an arched chamber, in Paisley abbey, on a charge of Witchcraft. It will be seen, by the relation, that the chamber was known long afterwards by the name of *Steenie's Chaumer*, but in what part of the building it is situated the editors have not been able to ascertain. In all likelihood, it was in the dark vaulted room—an entry to which may be seen on the south wall of the sounding aisle, at a considerable elevation from the floor, and which has a communication with that part of the building now known by the name of the old palace—where *Steenie* was confined. The story affords another instance of the danger a person subjected himself to, who exhibited more intelligence and shrewdness than his neighbours in those unholy times.

The Cochrans derive their name from the barony so called in Renfrewshire. The small estate of Clippens has been in the family by lineal descent for about 300 years; but the records are lost till 1602, when Stephen Cochran was proprietor: he was a branch of the Cochrans of Cal-doun (Ayrshire) from whom sprang the Dundonald Earls.

This Stephen was a shrewd, intelligent man, far superior to his illiterate neighbours of those days. These fanatical and ignorant enthusiasts got him conveyed to Paisley, accusing him of Witchcraft, and confined him in an arched room over the porch entering the Old Abbey Church, which still bears the name of *Steenie's Chamber*. He would have been tried for dealing in the *black art*, but by the influence of his relation William Cochran of Cal-doun, grandfather to the first Earl of Dundonald, he was liberated.

Stephen, who was very wealthy, presented his friend with a large sum of money, (it is said a skinful) for his good office, and this was acknowledged by Thomas the eighth earl to have been the foundation of his family.



Dr Crawford of Lochwinnoch has kindly furnished us with the following particulars regarding this same *Steenie*. It will be observed that the family tree is altogether silent regarding his smuggling propensities. The incident of his setting his bonnet on the *lum head*, with a hole in the crown of it, bears a striking resemblance to Michael Scott's setting his over a *coal heugh*, wanting the crown, for the same purpose, namely, to cheat the Deil. We give the storie in Dr. Crawford's own words.

“*Stein Cochran of Clippings, a warlock*.—This Stein was infest in the Clippings in 1631. He was a great smuggler. He invented a carriage, or a machine to convey his smuggled goods. He himself was cuir't altogether by this muckle machine, as weel as the contraband geir; it was like a great quyle of hay moving alang in the mirk—he was considered a warlock. He cheated the Deil in a certain bargain, thus: he made a paction wi' him for a certain service, to be performed by him, Stein. The Deil in a certain time was transformed into the shape of an ap; Stein killed this ap through ignorance. At another time being on the rigging of his house he heard the Deil's voice from a peat. The Deil requested him to relieve him from the peat. Stein made a sicker bargain before he consented. The Deil hecht to fill his bonat up to the rim with yellow gowd. Stein had riven a hole in his bonat and set it on the lum head. The Deil tume't gowd in it—the hole let it fall. His Clootieship was obliged to bring ither supplies without end. At anither time Stein was clappit into the Paisley tolbooth for smuggling. His room is called to this day Steenie's room.”

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Witch is derived from the Dutch *witchelen*, whining or neighing like a horse, also to foretell and spae. The Germans, as Tacitus informs us, used to divine and foretell things to come by the neighing and whining of their horses. Might not the custom of nailing horse shoes to doors be traced to that source?

Mr Pennant, in his tour through Scotland, says, that the farmers carefully preserve their kye and bestial against Witchcraft, by placing branches of the *Rowantree* and *Honeysuckle* on their byres on the 2d of May, of Beltane. They hope to preserve the milk of the kye, and their wives from miscarriage, by tying red threads about them; they bleed a supposed witch to preserve themselves from her charms. We have shown in several parts of this work that the customs to which Mr Pennant alludes are not yet wholly obsolete, and have given in illustration the case of a farmer in Mearns parish, Renfrewshire, who had a cow that produced twins, and to prevent ill luck or misfortune from reaching the rest of his herd of cattle, the two calves were, by the owner's order, buried alive at the threshold of his byre! Our readers, we think, will agree with us when we say that the fellow who could perpetrate such an action, would not have been ill used although he had been subjected to a sound horse whipping. Had the law which awards punishment to those who are cruel to their cattle been in force at the time, there is not a doubt but that the boor would have been invited to a conference with the authorities of the land.

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About eighty years ago an individual took a lease of a farm, called Perrystane, which lies a little to the west of the Stanley Green farm, in the Abbey parish of Paisley. The former tenant was unco swear't to lea' the farm, an' as he was respeckit by his neebors, the incomer couldna expeck to be in vera guid odour wi' the folk he was gaun to live amang. Ony bodie that tak's a house o'er the head o' anither, mauna leuk for being weel spoken o', an' sae fan' the new tenant o' Perrystane. On the day after his arrival his kye were put out to the fiel's on as guid a braird as was in a' the kintra side, but fient a ane o' them wad put down a mou' to taste it. Weel, a beggar bodie that had been in the habit o' getting his bit mouthfu' o' meat in that district, bethought himsel' that if he was to pay a visit to the new come farmer, he couldna fail to get a bellyfu',

an' 'twere for naething else than gude luck, or to get *his* gude word at least; sae aff he strides for Perrystane. The gudeman happened to be out, but the gudewife gaed him a kindly welcome, an' tweel-a-wat he didna want for a dinner, forbye something to put into his wallet. In the course o' cracking, the farmer's wife tauld the beggar about the kye, an' wonner't what could be the matter wi' them. "I think," quo' the auld man, "somebody 'ill hae witched them." "I was amaist thinking sae mysel'," replied the gudewife; "are they onie bodie in thir parts that's suspeckit for ony thing o' the kind?" "Atweel are they," returned the gaberlunzie, "I ken a gae pickle o' them mysel'." "Dear me, and d'ye no ken ony bodie that can cast aff their cantrips? I'm sure I wadna grudge to reward them weel, giff they wad come an' tak them aff o' my puir dumb brutes." "I'm reckoned no that ill o't mysel'," replied the beggar. "I've kuir't mony a bodie's kye in my time, an' I dinna doubt but I might kuir your's as weel as ither folks." "Weel gudeman, giff ye'll kuir mine I'se gie you that kibbock that ye're eatin' a bit o' hame wi' you, as soon as ever the kye are made what they were afore they cam' here." "Weel I'se try't," quo' the beggar; sae just let me tak a smoke, an' be sure no to speak a word to me till I'm dune, an' I think I'll fin' out some scheme that'll undo the witches' black art." So saying he seated himself by the fireside, and commenced smoking in right good earnest, the farmer's wife eyeing him all the while, with feelings in which hope and doubt were mixed in nearly equal proportions. The beggar's thoughts were of a different nature. Apparently absorbed in deep thought, his eyes were continually turning to the cheese, which he saw in perspective as his own, while his mind was employed in planning how he could best accomplish his purpose. At length he asked his entertainer the following question—"Mistress, hae ye ony o' the claes in the house that either you or your gudeman was married in?" To this interrogation she replied, after turning the affair in her mind for a few moments, "No man, no a rag o' them.

nor hasna been this mony a year; wad they ha'en ony effect in taking aff Witchcraft?" "A great deal," was the reply, "giff folk kent hoo to apply them, but stop, I've thought on anither plan, ye'll maybe ha'e some o' the claes that the gudeman was dressed in, when some o' the weans were bapteesed." "Let me see, let me see—yes man there are! when that lassie that's just gane to the door was kirsen't, her father had on a pair o' spik' an' span new breeks, and the remains o' them's in the house to this vera day. Brawly I ha'e min' o' them, for they were o' a forbye colour that I didna like, an' of course they were seldomer on on that account, for I likit far better to see him in ony ither pair that ever he had, than in them; sae I whiles keepit them out o' sight, or there's nae doubt but they wad ha'e been in the midden lang syne. Weel, gude whiles comes frae a thing where ane wad least expeck it; I'll shune let you see the breeks." "Ye needna bring the breeks to me; sit your wa's dune on your seat, an' I'll tell you what ye're to do wi' them. Before ye gang to your bed the night, tak' you the breeks, an' cut them into sma' pieces, an' then put them into the biggest pat ye hae in the house, an' be sure that ye put on a gude big fire, an' let the pat be on't the hail night, an' be sure to keep it as fu' o' water as ye can. It'll boil o'er nae doubt, an' fuff awa' up the lum in the shape o' steam, but ye maun rise noo an' then, an' eek it up again, an' in the morning, after the broo's weel eneuch cool't, gie ilka cow ye hae as muckle o't as it can drink, an' every twa hours after, through the hail course o' the day, gie them anither drink o' the *broo o' the breeks*, an' be sure that they taste nae ither thing, till they are put out on the following morning; an' I'll wager a brown bawbee, that the deil a witchcraft 'ill be about them; an' I'll be here on the forenoon o' the day that ye put them out, to see what effect the charm has had. Night cam, and the breeks were carefully cut up an' boiled, buttons an' a', according to the auld man's direction, an' as carefully served up on the following day, not much to the satisfaction of

the cattle, whose lowings indicated how much rather they would have been luxuriating on the grass they had set so little value on, on the preceding day. True to his appointment, as might have been expected, the beggar made his appearance at the verra hour he had promised, an' was met at the door by his credulous dupe, who accosted him in the following terms: "Come away, gudeman, I'm glad to see you; I fallowed your directions to a verra hair, an' I'm proud to tell you, that whenever the kye were turned out this morning, they fell to eating as greedily as if they had not seen meat for a fortnight—the kibbuck's yours, an' I'm proud that it's in my power to gie you't, for weel-a-wat ye weel deserve't,; an' I hope ye'll never gang by my door again, without giein us a ca'. It's a guide thing for honest folk, that there's sicna aue amang us, or, guide faith, thae wanchansie cratur, that gie themselves o'er to the Deil, for the verra purpose o' working mischief on their neibours, wad soon o'ergang us. So he led him into the house, and put into his hands the cheese, which his auld-farrent knavery had made his ain.

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Our limits prevent us from entering into the superstitions connected with alchymy, astrology, and the philosopher's stone, for superstitions, mixed up with knavery, they certainly were. Learned men secluded themselves from general society, to hang over crucibles and alembics, to discover what in the nature of things was an impossibility. The searching science of chemistry, however, has exploded all such absurdities, and the learned of the present age find in the misapplied labours of the astrologer, and the transmuter of metals, nothing but fitting subjects for ridicule and pity. We will subjoin a brief outline of the life of one of those worthies, who made a considerable figure in the days when Shakspeare wrote his immortal works; and as it presents in its general features a striking likeness of the class to which he attached himself, we will allow the rest of his brethren to remain in the obscurity from which they should never have sprung.



"The village of Mortlake, situated upon the banks of the Thames, is celebrated as having been the residence of one of the most singular characters of the sixteenth century. Dr. John Dee, the astrologer and alchymist, and one of the pioneers of the Rosicrucian philosophy, lived here for many years, and was buried in the chancel of the church. The ancient people of the village more than a century after his death, which took place in 1608, pointed out the exact spot where his ashes lay; but the curious inquirer would now seek in vain to discover it. Queen Elizabeth always treated Dr. Dee with marked consideration; and, when she ascended the throne, sent her favourite Dudley, afterwards Earl of Leicester, to consult him as to a lucky day for her coronation. She occasionally visited him at Mortlake, and is once said to have expressed a desire to be instructed by him in the secrets of astrology and alchymy. She devoutly believed that he would one day discover the philosopher's stone,—an object to which all his abilities, and he was not without a good portion, were directed. All the money he gained by telling fortunes, predicting lucky and unlucky days, and casting nativities, was melted away in his furnaces in the futile search for the stone, or the elixir, which was to change pokers and tongs, pots and kettles, and even the pump in his back-yard into pure gold. Thus, though he gained immense sums of money, he was always poor; and when Count Laski, a wealthy Pole, who was travelling in England, desirous of making his acquaintance, sent him word that he would come and dine with him, Dee was obliged to apply to Queen Elizabeth to borrow money to treat the stranger with becoming hospitality. Elizabeth sympathized in his distress, and sent him twenty pounds immediately.

"It was shortly before he received this visit that he made a grand discovery. He firmly believed that by means of a small black stone with a shining surface, and cut in the form of a diamond, which he possessed, he could hold converse with the elementary spirits, and be instructed by



them in all the secrets of science, and all the mysteries of nature. He has himself left a most extraordinary narrative of his conversations with the spirits; part of which was published after his death by Dr. Casaubon, and the remainder of which may still be seen among the manuscripts in the British Museum. He says, that as he was one day in November, 1582, sitting in his study at Mortlake, engaged in fervent prayer, the angel Uriel appeared at his window, and gave him a translucent stone, into which he might summon the angels, and ask them questions whenever he pleased. He also says that an angel appeared to him in the form of a beautiful little maiden, who slid gracefully among the leaves of his books, and fluttered her pretty wings there. The conversations which, as he informs us, he held with this and with many other spirits, were of the most puerile kind; but in Dee's opinion were full of truth, wisdom, and philosophy, and contained precepts which, if the world had followed, would have saved it from the horrors of many bitter and bloody revolutions. He soon found that he could not converse with his attendant spirits and note down at the same time what they said, and he therefore engaged another fortune-teller and alchymist, named Kelly, to act as his seer, and converse with the spirits, while he devoted himself to reporting their heavenly talk. Kelly humoured the whim or the insanity of his principal, and soon rendered himself so necessary, that Dee received him into his family, esteemed him as his friend, and was proud of him as his disciple.

"When Count Laski came, the two worthies showed him all their wonders. The Pole was highly delighted with the conversation and acquirements of the doctor, and listened with eagerness to his promises that he would find the philosopher's stone for him, and make him the wealthiest man the world ever saw. The doctor was as much pleased with his guest, whom he knew to be rich and powerful; and he and Kelly both formed the design of fastening themselves upon him, and living sumptuously at

his expense until they found the philosopher's stone. Laski, after great pretended difficulty, was admitted to the conversations with the spirits, and finally impressed with such high notions of the learning and genius of both Dee and Kelly, that he invited them to go and reside with him on his estates near Cracow. The astrologers desired nothing better; and Dee especially was anxious to quit England, where he imagined he was not safe, the mob a short time before having threatened to break into his house, and destroy his library and all his philosophical apparatus. They all left England secretly—Dee being afraid of offending Elizabeth,—and reached the estates of Laski in safety. The astrologers resided with him no more than a month, for his finances were in such a state of disorder, and they were such expensive guests that he could not maintain them; and, as he soon abandoned his hopes of the philosopher's stone, he took the earliest opportunity of sending them about their business. They next fastened themselves upon the Emperor Rudolph, and afterwards upon Stephen, king of Poland. They drew considerable sums from the exchequer of the latter, leading him on with false hopes of inexhaustible wealth and boundless dominion, until he grew weary of seeing such vast outlay, and receiving no return for it except in empty promises. Elizabeth felt the loss of her astrologer, and sent for him at various times during the six years that he was on the Continent. At last his affairs beginning to look gloomy, having quarrelled with Kelly, offended or disgusted all his former patrons, and more than once run the risk of perpetual imprisonment, he closed with her offers, and determined to return to England. He set out from Trebona in the spring of 1589, travelling in great splendour, with a train of three coaches, and a large quantity of baggage. Immediately on his arrival, Elizabeth gave him audience at Richmond, and promised to see to his fortunes. Little however was done; for, sanguine as the queen may at one time have been that Dee would discover the philosopher's stone, she soon saw reason to doubt his capabili-

ties. But she never wholly withdrew her favour from him; and, on his repeated applications for relief, appointed a committee of the privy council to inquire into the state of his affairs, and see what could be done for him. Dee then made a claim for the destruction of his books and implements by the mob at Mortlake soon after he took his departure, and furthermore stated that he considered the queen his debtor for the expense of his journey home from the Continent, which he said he would not have undertaken unless at her special command. Elizabeth, however, would not acknowledge her liability, but sent Dee a small sum by way of charity. He at last, upon his representation that he was starving, obtained of her the Chancellorship of St. Paul's cathedral, which office he held for one year, and then exchanged for the wardenship of the College at Manchester. He was now more than seventy years of age; and, becoming unable to perform with any activity the duties of his station, he resigned it after seven years, hoping that a pension would be granted to him. In this hope he was disappointed. He then retired to Mortlake, and lived upon the bounty of the queen. After her death he tried to propitiate King James I.; but that monarch took no notice of him whatever, and he died in 1608 in a state but little removed from absolute penury. His companion Kelly did not live so long; but, being imprisoned by some German potentate, who by that means attempted to extort from him the pretended secret of gold-making, he endeavoured to escape from his dungeon by leaping from a high window, and killed himself by the fall."—*Bentley's Miscellany for June, 1839.*

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To come nearer our own time—about the latter end of the last century, the celebrated artist, Loutherbrough, resided in Hammersmith, near London, and drew great crowds to his house, by an exhibition something akin to the mummeries of animal magnetism, as now practised. He pretended to cure all manner of diseases by the mere laying on of hands, aided by prayer; and it is mentioned,

that as many as three thousand people at a time waited around his garden, expecting to be relieved of their infirmities by this potential artist. In the same place, much to its credit surely, about fifteen years ago, it was noted in London as the scene where an awful ghost played its antics, to the great alarm of all the silly. These, and many other instances which we could adduce, not to speak of men and women soliciting permission to rub themselves against the dead body of a suspended criminal, (a case of which occurred in London about a month ago, when the notorious Marchand was hanged,) demonstrate to a nicety, that if superstitions of a dark cast still cloud the minds of many of the inhabitants of Scotland, the inhabitants of merry England are not a *great* many degrees removed from them.

## A P P E N D I X.

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### APPENDIX A.— See pp. 48 and 60.

THE subscribed attestations of Dr. Matthew Brisbane, physician, and Mr Henry Marshall, apothecary in Glasgow, did influence the belief of an extraordinary cause of these events.

The doctor, on the 31st December, 1696, tells, that at first sight, when he was brought to the girl she appeared so brisk in motion, so florid in colour, so cheerful, and in a word every way healthful, that he could hardly be persuaded she had need of a physician; but within ten minutes he found himself obliged to alter his thoughts, for she rose from her feet, and advertised she was instantly to be seized with a fit, according whereunto he observed a considerable distension in her left hypochondre, which in a trace falling, she was forthwith taken with horrid convulsive motions and heavy groans at first; which afterwards as soon as she was able to frame words, turned into expostulatory mourning with some women; particularly Campbell and Naesmith. Yet he thought these symptoms were reducible to the freaks of hypochondraic melancholy, and therefore put her in such a course proper against that kind of malady. Upon which being freed, for some time: he was alarmed that the child was returned to town worse than ever for having his assistance. He then was frequently with her, and observed her narrowly, so that he was confident she had no visible correspondent to subminister hair, straw, coal, cinders, hay, and such like trash unto her; all which upon several occasions he saw her put out of her mouth without being wet; nay, rather as they had been dried with artifice, and actually hot above the natural warmth of the body; sometimes after severe fits, and other times without trouble when discoursing with him. When she had only light convulsive motions, but to a high degree, such rigidity of the whole body, as we call *trismus*, she did not fancy as at other times, she saw these persons already named about her; but the upcasting of the trash above-mentioned, did no sooner cease, than in all her fits, when she was able to speak any, she

always cried out they were pricking or pinching her. He saw her also when free of fits suddenly seized with dumbness, &c. And this he solemnly declares himself to have seen and handled, and were it not for the hay, straw, &c., he should not despair to reduce the other symptoms to their proper classes, in the catalogue of human diseases.

Mr. Marshall the apothecary concurs with the doctor; and gives some particular instances of his own observation; and among the rest, that the girl having fallen headlong upon the ground, as she had been thrown down with violence, fell a reasoning very distinctly thus: 'Katie what ails thee at me, I am sure I never did thee wrong; come let us gree, let there be no difference betwixt us, let us shake hands together,' putting forth her hand, said, 'Well, Katie, I cannot help it, ye will not gree with me:' and immediately she cried, fell into a swoon, and out of that into a rage, wherein she continued without intermission for about half an hour; and perfectly recovered. Then she told him that she saw Katie Campbell, Nancy Naesmith, &c., and many more; Campbell was going to thrust a sword into her side, which made her so desirous to be agreed with her; and when the girl told him this, she instantly fell into another fit as formerly, in which she continued another half hour &c., dated 1st Jan., 1697. —

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#### APPENDIX B.—See p. 92.

THE following letters were written between the condemnation and execution of the persons who were accused of bewitching Christian Shaw, of Bargarran, and were printed in the year 1698. The first is remarkable for containing the advocate's speech to the jury, and sets in a clear light the gross ignorance that pervaded the minds of men who dared, in the face of reason and common sense, to arraign their fellow-creatures for a crime which human wisdom could not prove, and which innocence itself had no means of turning aside. The second letter contains the answers of the prisoners, and some remarks upon the trials; and the reader will see at a glance, that the author had been deeply imbued with the savage belief which casts such a damning stain on the period we are treating of. With these remarks we submit the letters to our readers.

#### I.

"SIR,

"You having told me, that the odd passages which occur in the west, have put many of your neighbours and yourself, upon



reading all the books you can get, treating of Witchcraft; and therefore desired me to transmit to you my observations at the court. I shall not pre-occupy your opinion by giving them in my own form; but herein I send you the exactest duplicate of the advocate's speech to the Inquest which I could obtain; and by the next post you shall have something more curious, viz., A collection of their answers to the objections against the six last witnesses, that were adduced for concluding the proof: having these, you will want little that could be agreeable to such an accurate gust as yours is.

"The Advocate's Speech to the Inquest was of this import:—

"*Good Men of Inquest,*

"You having sitten above twenty hours in overhearing the probation: and being inclosed, where, it is like, you will take no small time to reconsider and compare it; we shall not detain you with summing up the same in particular, but shall only suggest some things, whereof it is fit you take special notice in your perusal of it, viz., 1st, The nature of your own power, and the management thereof. 2dly, The object of this power which lies before you, wherein you are to consider in the first place, whether or not there has been Witchcraft in the malefices libelled? and in the next place, whether or not these pannels are the Witches?

"As to your power, it is certain that you are both judges and witnesses, by the opinion of our lawyers and custom; therefore you are called out of the neighbourhood, as presumed best to know the quality of the pannels, and the notoriety of their guilt or innocence. Your oath is, that you shall all truth tell, and no truth conceal; which does plainly imply, that you are to condemn or assail, conform to your proper conviction. Such is the excellent constitution of juries in England; and ought to hold more specially in this circumstantiate case, where there is such a chain of different kinds of probation concurring against the same pannels, as will appear by the review thereof in its proper place.

"We are not to press you with the ordinary severity of threatening an assize of error, in case you should absolve; but wholly leave you to the conduct of God and your own conscience, and desire that you proceed with all the care of the pannels' lives that is possible for you, as the honourable judges have set to you a desirable pattern, in their great caution thereanent.

"As to the probation itself, you see, that it is divided in three parts, viz., The extraordinariness of the malefices; the probability of the concurring adminicles; and the clearness of the positive probation.

"As to the first part, the malefices, or *corpora delicti*, are proven

by unexceptionable witnesses, to have fallen out in such an odd and extraordinary a manner, that it points out some other causes than the ordinary course of nature, to have produced these effects.

“For clearing of this, particularly in relation to the torments of Bargarran’s daughter, you may consider not only the extraordinary things that could not proceed from a natural disease, which lie proven before you, but also several other matters of fact, which is notour, have been seen by some of yourselves, and lie here in a journal of her sufferings; every article whereof is attested by the subscriptions of persons of entire credit, before the honourable commissioners appointed by His Majesty’s Privy Council, for making enquiry thereanent.

“This girl’s throwing out of hairs, pins, and coals of greater heat than that of her body or blood; as also so dry that they appeared not to have come out of her stomach; nor had she any press of vomiting at the time; that she declared the same to have been put in her mouth by her tormentors; is deponed by Doctor Brisbane, in his opinion, not to proceed from a natural cause.

“She was not tormented by any of the pannels after their imprisonment; except two nights by Katharine Campbell; which being a surprise, it was thereafter discovered, that these two nights the jailor’s wife had got out Katharine Campbell to spin in her house.

“She having been speaking to one of her tormentors as present, (though invisible to the bye-standers,) and asking how her tormentors had got these coloured red sleeves; she suddenly gets up, takes hold of them, the company hears a shriek, and she pulls away two pieces of red cloth, which all the bye-standers beheld with amazement in her hands; nor was there any other piece of this kind of cloth to be found in the room at that occasion.

“She told that her tormentors were giving her a glass of sack, an orange peel, &c., (thereby ensnaring her to accept of a favour from them,) and accordingly she was seen to move her lips, and to have an orange peel betwixt her teeth; though there was no visible hand that could have done it.

“She advertised before-hand that one of her tormentors was to be at the door at a particular hour: and that another of them was in the kitchen before any did tell her thereof; which accordingly fell out. And these being brought to her presence became obnoxious to the ordinary means of discovery.

“When her glove fell down from her, at a time when several persons were about her, it was lifted again by a hand invisible to them

“She was not only transported through the hall and down stairs, without perceiving her feet to touch the ground; but also was hurried in a flight up stairs: and when a minister endeavoured

to retain her, he found a sensible weight, besides her own strength, drawing her from him.

"When she complained, that her tormentors had bitten and scratched her, the steads of the nails and teeth were seen upon her skin, with blood and spittle about the wounds, which were above twenty-four ; while neither her own, nor any other teeth that were visible, could have done it.

"She was most vehemently distorted upon attempting to tell or even write the names of her tormentors ; yet that ceased as to any of them, how soon the person was delated ; and particularly she had liberty, after many painful attempts, to accuse Margaret Lang, how soon a charm of hair to restrain her, which Margaret had left behind the door, was found and burned ; the girl having told it to have been tint, in manner mentioned in the deposition.

"She did throw out no more hair after the finding the ball of hair, of the same colour and kind with that thrown out by the girl, in Katharine Campbell's pocket, with pins in it, and the burning of it.

"After Agnes Naesmith had prayed for her, she did appear to her, but not torment her.

"She foretold, that her tormentors had concerted to throw her in a fit, (whereof they did premonish, of design to fright her to renounce her baptism by the terror,) at a certain hour, and had left one of their number to execute it ; according whereunto there was a woman with a red coat seen under a tree in the orchard, and the torment was brought on at the time appointed.

"When she told there was something tormenting her under the cloaths, the spectators saw the bed-cloaths move in an extraordinary manner, after the girl had been raised out of them.

"When she complained she was beaten : the bye-standers heard the noise of the strokes.

"She cried out at a time, that her thigh was hurt ; and one of the company having searched her pocket, found a knife ; but unfolded : however, having folded up the same, and put it in a second time, she cries of new : and upon the second search, it, (though secured by the spring,) is found open, to the great wonder of beholders ; since they did watch, that no visible thing could have possibly opened it.

"She told of a charm under the bed : and accordingly it was found in the shape of an egg, which melted away on being put in the fire : she told also that her sister, who was boarded abroad, had charms put above her in the house, and would not recover of the decaying sickness till she was brought out of it. According whereunto the child being brought home, she straightway recovered.

"She told them of their meeting in the yard of Bargarran, for

consulting anent the destroying of her ; and accordingly the confessants have deponed, that they did meet and consult her ruin in that place.

“ The story anent her telling, that the commissioners, though at three miles’ distance, had granted a warrant to the sheriff, to apprehend one of her tormentors ; her telling so perfect an account of the sheriff and of Mr Guthrie who was with him, while her eyes were tied and fast ; her being in excessive torments, (as she foretold) till that person was apprehended, and immediately thereupon, though at many miles’ distance, her telling that her tormentors were now taken, betwixt twelve and one o’clock in the morning, and the sheriff, when he returned, did declare the seizure to have been about that time ; is so notour, and so well attested, that we need only to put you in mind thereof.

“ Her falling in fits upon the sight or touch of her tormentors, was no effect of imagination ; for she was fully hoodwinked with a cloak, so as she saw nobody whatsoever ; yet upon the approach of her tormentor, she immediately fell down as dead : whereas she remained no ways startled upon the touch of any other : which experiments were tried for ascertaining this mean of discovery.

“ Finally, she is naturally sagacious and observant, and discovered her integrity in face of court ; for when the president asked, whether or not she knew one of the pannel’s name that was to be pricked ? she answered, that though she knew her well enough of herself ; yet one had told her the name of this pannel, when she was sent for to be confronted with her : so far did this girl discover her aversion from any thing that might seem intended to aid unfairly the natural evidence of truth ; and her firmness to the utmost against temptations of becoming a witch ; particularly against the last assault of Satan ; wherein he persuaded her at least to go to their meetings, and she answered that she would not follow such a base fallen creature ; and he rejoining, that she would go to hell however for her other sins ; and she answering, that he was a liar from the beginning ; and the blood of Jesus would cleanse her from all iniquity : whereupon he disappeared, and she perfectly recovered upon the sabbath thereafter ; was an happy end put to this fearful tragedy of Witchcraft, and confirms to conviction the reality of it.

“ As to the murdering of the children, and the minister libelled : you may observe several extraordinary things appearing in them ; particularly, the witnesses depone, the minister to have been in excessive torments, and of an unusual colour, to have been of sound judgment ; and yet he did tell of several women being about him, and that he heard the noise of the door opening, when none else did hear it. The children were well at night, and found dead in the morning, with a little blood on their noses, and blaes at the

roots of their ears ; which were obvious symptoms of stranglings . besides that it is testified, that the keeper of one of them, cried out, ' Matthew ! Matthew ! the child is dead . ' And the house of the other was whitened within, with sifting of meal the night before . Both which particulars were told and discovered by the confessants, before the witnesses which now concur with them in it, were examined .

" The second part of the probation consists of several adminicles, proven by unsuspected witnesses, which lead us to suspect those pannels to be Witches, as so many lines drawn from a circumference to a center, and as an avenue to the positive probation thereafter adduced : and these either strike at the whole pannels in general, or some of them in particular . In general we need not enumerate all these adminicles, but remit you to the probation, which is so full thereanent ; only you will be pleased to notice, that it is clearly proven, that all the pannels have insensible marks, and some of them in an extraordinary manner ; that most of them have been long reputed Witches, and some of them delated in 1687, by a confessing Witch, whose subscribed confession has been produced, you see that none of them doth shed tears ; nor were they ever discovered to do it since their imprisonment, notwithstanding of their frequent howlings ; so that it is not a sudden grief or surprise . And finally, that the girl fell into fits of torment upon the pannels' approaches to her, and that she did name them all frequently, either out or in her fits .

" In particular, you see how Katharine Campbell was provoked by this girl's discovering her theft ; whereupon she has brought in the rest of her confederates to act the following mischiefs ; how thereupon Campbell did curse and imprecate in a terrible manner ; how she staid out of her bed at night, and was frequently drousy in the morning ; how she was named by the girl, particularly the two nights that she was out of prison . The ball of hair was taken out of her pocket and burned ; whereupon the girl's throwing out of hair did cease ; she could not express one word, even when on her knees, of prayer, for the girl's recovery ; and the insensible marks on her were remarkable .

" Agnes Nacsmith did not torment the girl after she had prayed for her ; she was reputed a Witch, and hath the marks . She came early in the morning to Bargarran's close, when by her refusing to go in, it appeareth she had no business ; yea, it is plain, that she had a resentment, for her not getting greater alms the last time she was there . The girl declared, *ex incontinenti*, that Nacsmith asked her health and age ; which in these circumstances was a shrewd presumption of her evil design ; and she acknowledged herself to have done this, when she asked the age of another child ; wherein by providence she was befooled, since that which she



thought would have been an excuse, tended to discover her guilt. And lastly, after this appearance of Agnes Naesmith, the girl did take her first fit, and nominate her among her first tormentors.

“Margaret Lang, that great impostor, has been a great masterpiece of the Devil: she has confessed unnatural lust, which is known to some of your number; she sat near the door where the charm of hair was found, which the girl declared did keep up her tongue; and upon burning thereof, it was loosed. The girl fell in fits upon her approach; she has notable marks; particularly one, which the confessants declared she lately received; and by inspection, it appears to be recent. When she came from her private conversation, (no doubt with the Devil) she raged as if she had been possessed, and could not but declare, that she expected a violent death. She looked in the face of James Millar's child, and asked her age, whereupon that child sickened the same night, and named Margaret Lang on her death-bed. It appears she was ready to show to Janet Laird a sight of her mother, who had been three years dead. And finally, she has been taken in several lies and gross prevarications; particularly you may remember how six hours ago, when the witnesses were examined on the ball of hair found with Katharine Campbell, a gentleman, (Mr. Stewart of ———,) heard her say to Katharine in the ear, ‘This is well waird on you, because you would not put it away when I desired you,’ &c. Which the said Mr Stewart did openly testify in court upon oath; notwithstanding whereof, this impudent wretch had the confidence to deny it, though Katharine Campbell also confessed that she had pulled at her, and had spoke somewhat to her, to which she did not advert. This was no wonder, the witnesses deponing at the same time being close against Katharine.

“Margaret Fulton was reputed a Witch, has the mark of it, and acknowledged in presence of her husband, that she made use of a charm, which appeared full of small stones and blood. That her husband had brought her back from the fairies; and her repute of being a Witch is of an old date, besides her being often named by the maleficiate girl.

“As to the Lindsays, they all have the mark, and were all of a long time reputed to be witches. John Lindsay, in Barlock, was accidentally discovered by the girl's taking a fit upon his coming to the house. John and James Lindsay were delated by a confessing Witch in anno 1687, which confession is publicly read before you, and there was money given to the Sheriff depute for delaying of the pursuit. James Lindsay appeared to William Semple suddenly, and flew about like a fowl, for an opportunity to strike him, in revenge of the quarrel mentioned in the deposition, and at last prevailed to strike him dead over a dyke. And finally, which is a remarkable indication both to truth and providence, the very



witnesses adduced in the exculpation, for the Lindsays, deponed so clearly against them, even beyond the pursuer's witnesses, that their advocate was stunned thereat ; and thereupon desisted from craving any more witnesses to be examined on the exculpation.

" It is true, some of these indications may be in one, and others of them in another, either from nature or accident, and yet that person not be a Witch : but it was never heard nor read, that all these indications, which are so many discoveries by providence, of a crime that might otherwise remain in the dark, did ever concur in one and the same individual person that was innocent : yea, on the contrary, they, by the wisdom and experience of all nations, do also convincingly discover a Witch, as the symptoms of a leprosy concerted by all physicians, do unfold the person affected with the same to be leperous, but *esto*, they are not sufficient of themselves, yet their tendency and meaning, being cleared and applied to their proper cause, by a liquid and positive probation, there wants no more to determine you anent the pannel's guilt. And therefore,

" Thirdly, As to the third part of the probation, we remit the positive depositions of the confessants, and against whom they do concur, wholly to your own perusal or examination ; only you would be pleased to notice, 1st, Something which do very much sustain the credibility of their testimonies, arising from their examination in court. 2dly, We shall explain to you the import of the word *Nota*, which is added to the interlocutor of the judges admitting these last witnesses.

" First, Elizabeth Anderson is of sufficient age, being seventeen ; but so young and pointed, that her deposition appears no effect of melancholy : she accused her father to his face when he was a-dying in the prison, as now there are two of her aunts in the pannel, which certainly must proceed from the strength of truth, since even Dives retained a natural affection to his relations ; she went on foot to the meetings with her father, except only that the Devil transported them over the water Clyde ; which was easy to the prince of the air, who does far greater things by his hurricanes, she tells that Montgomerie's house was meally when his child was strangled : and declares, that she never renounced her baptism, but was carried along by the concussion of the parent : so that nothing can be objected against her testimony in any judgment, much less an excepted crime.

" James Lindsay, it is true, is of less import ; yet by his weeping when he came in and was admonished of the greatness of his guilt, it appears that he had a sense of it : he hath a natural precipitancy in what he speaks, yet that is commonly the concomitant of ingenuity, as importing his expressions not to be forethought. He concurs in most things with the others, and yet he has declared, that he saw not Margaret Fulton at Dumbarton, &c. Which

implies that he does not file the pannels all at random, but tells what occurred to his senses, &c.

“Janet and Margaret Rodgers are instances of a singular providence; for they did confess the same morning that the court did last sit, of their own proper motive, there being neither ministers nor judges beside them at the time. Agnes Naesmith is Janet's relation, and she tells that she never saw Katharine Campbell, as Margaret declares, that she did not see John Lindsay in Barloch; which plainly demonstrates that they tell only the dictates of their natural conscience, arising from discretion and knowledge of the true matters of fact: they both professed their repentance last sabbath in the church; and do persist with great firmness, as you see their deportment in deponing to the congruous and exact.

“Thomas Lindsay and Christian Shaw, being under pupilarity, we did not press their being put to an oath; yet you saw that they did declare in court against those pannels in such an harmony with the rest of the deponents, and gave such a cause of their knowledge, that it is certain their own youngness in years, adds extremely to the credit of their testimony: because thereby it is incredible, that they could have contrived or executed the acting of concert.

“As to the second, since these witnesses are admitted by the judges; it necessarily implies, that they meant them to be probative; only they adjected the words *cum nota*; that is, you must notice, or *notandum est*, that there must something else concur to prove the guilt of the pannels, by and atour the depositions of any two such witnesses: but so it is that all the adminicles on which you have seen probation led, for more than sixteen hours of your time, are strengthening evidences, of those witnesses' credibility, and cannot but have been noticed by you, as illative of the same things which they depone. Whereby the *nota* is fully taken off by the concurrence of four other positive testimonies, agreeing with that of two of these witnesses: by the extraordinariness of the *corpora delicti*: by the probability of the adminicles; and finally by the whole chain of this affair, and the sparkles of an infernal fire which in every place hath broken out of it.

“It is true, there are some few of the adminicles that are proven only by one witness, but as to this you may consider, 1st, That a witness deponing *de facto proprio*, is in law more credited than any other single witness. And this is the present case as to some of the adminicles. 2dly, The antecedent concomitant and subsequent circumstances of fact, do sustain the testimony and make the *semi plenary* probation to become full. But 3dly, The other adminicles undoubtedly proven by concurring witnesses, are *per se* sufficient; and therefore you saw us, at the desire of the judges, forbear to call the far greatest part of our witnesses; because tho

time had already run to so great a length, and it was thought that there was already enough proven of presumptions; for it may also reasonably be imagined, that the most regular and curious scheme had emerged from the fortuitous concourse of atoms, roving without rule, as that so many indications should concenter against each of these pannels, and yet they remain innocent of Witchcraft.

“ Now upon the whole, you will take notice, that presumption being vehement, make a more certain probation than witnesses because presumptions are natural emanations of the thing itself, which cannot be bribed; whereas witnesses are obnoxious; so in our law there was one condemned for theft, another for falsehood, and a third for murdering of a child, merely upon presumptions, as is related by M’Kenzie in his Criminal Treatise, much more may presumptions obstruct the faith of, and take off the *nota* from positive witnesses: for it is a gross mistake, that several proofs which have each of them some import, may not be joined to make a full evidence, the same way as two small candles in a dark room, will not suffice, yet several others being added to them, will make a sufficient light, to discover the murderer; two boys will be able to carry a weight which one of them would not be able to sustain, as two units make a full number: one witness of whatsoever dignity proves nothing; yet out of the mouth of two or three witnesses, every truth shall be established. And finally, though one coal make not a fire that can do the work; yet several coals added to it, increase the flame, which is hoped will be sufficient for the operation.

“ We shall therefore leave you with this conclusion, that as you ought to beware of condemning the innocent, and ought to incline to the safest side: so if these pannels be proven legally guilty; then *quoad* bygones, your eye ought not to spare them, nor ought you to suffer a witch to live; and as to the future, you in doing otherwise, would be accessory to all the blasphemies, apostasies, murders, torture, and seductions, &c., whereof these enemies of heaven and earth shall thereafter be guilty, when they have got out. So that the question seems simply to come to this, whether upon your oath *de fide*, you can swear, that the pannels, notwithstanding of all that is proven against them, are not guilty of Witchcraft; in the determination whereof, we pray God may direct you to the right course.

The inquest being inclosed near six hours, brought in their verdict to court that they found the libel proven.”

## II.

“ SIR,

“ I have collected, according to my promise, what appeared to be most specious in the reasonings, either in court or private con-

versation, anent receiving of the confessants as witnesses. You are not to imagine, that the pannels were condemned on the faith of these; for I do believe the probation by unexceptionable witnesses, led antecedent to this last, was so pregnant that the pannels might have been condemned on it, though these last had not been adduced.

“ I may have misled the energy of the argument sometimes, in a case which in itself is abstruse: however, you have it in such a manner as I was able to penetrate thereunto as follows.

“ In order to the more satisfactory answering of the objections made against these last witnesses, we shall first, lay before you the state of the case; and then clear up the determination of it.

“ As to the first, the question is not, whether partners in the crime, or others mentioned in the objections can be a concluding proof of themselves, though two of them would concur as to the same act of Witchcraft; but whether the *corpora delicti* appearing already to imply Witchcraft, and the extrinsic adminicles being so pregnant, to infer that these pannels are the witches; their concurring such characters, as by observance of all nations and ages, are the symptoms of a witch; particularly the marks, fame, not shedding of tears, &c, which are discoveries of providence of such a crime, that like avenues lead us to the secret of it. And finally, when six persons of different ages and stations, five confessants and the girl, do, when separately examined, agree in their answers to every material question that is put to them, even though it be new; so that it could not be concerted: we say, whether or not in such a case, may witnesses be received to put the capstone on the evidence by a positive probation, of a matter of fact, which is the object of sense, though otherwise they be liable to exception, if such extraordinariness of the *corpora delicti*, clearness of the adminicles, and of the diagnostics of witches, did not precede them as you have seen proven before you that they do.

“ The cases is not, whether these witnesses would be habile in an ordinary crime, which commonly falls to be exposed to other witnesses than those concerned in it; but whether they can be received in this extraordinary, occult and excepted crime of Witchcraft, wherein there are two special cases to be noticed, viz., sometimes the acts thereof are open and admit the choice of witnesses; such as charms used in the day-time, when the actor is visible. But that part of Witchcraft, whereby witches meet in the night time, adore their lord, contrive their malefices, and accordingly thereafter execute them when other witnesses are asleep, or the witches themselves are covered from sight, we say, that this can be no otherwise proven than by these that are intimate to it, joined to the positive proof and adminicles before mentioned.

“ We do not allege, that persons altogether destitute of knowledge and natural conscience, are not to be admitted in any case, such as infants, furious, fatuous, &c. Neither do we contend, that Thomas Lindsay and Christian Shaw, who are under pupilarity, should be put to an oath; for they are only to be examined separately before the court, upon interrogators, by which it may appear, whether or not they coincide with the four other confessants, that are to depone before them; and this is the pannel's advantage in case of disagreement. But we insist, that any person above pupilarity, giving evidences of considerable knowledge and natural conscience (which is a sufficient fund for all the credit that we need in this case, that is already almost fully proven) it is to be received as a witness.

“ As to the second, we shall make this as clear as noon. 1st, From reason and the nature of the thing. 2dly, Our own customs and decisions; and 3dly, The singularity of the circumstantiate case.

“ As to the first, the going to and coming from meetings, especially on foot; the falling down and worshipping the Devil there, under a corporeal shape (which he had when he tempted our Saviour to do it.) The actual murdering of children by a cord and napkin; and the tormenting of others by pins, &c., are plain objects of sense; and therefore the senses are to be believed anent them. For as reason hath things intelligible, and faith things supernatural: so the senses have things corporal for their objects, whereanent they are to be trusted, aye and while it be proven, that the appearance is impossible, or that the witness of it, is an impostor. It is a part of the witches' purchase from the Devil, that they cannot be seen at some occasions: so that the abominations committed then would remain unpunished, if such witnesses were not admitted. It cannot be thought that witches (who of all criminals are the most obstinate to confess) would venture the loss of their own lives, by deponing against others, against whom they have no special pique; yea, for whom they have particular affection, as several of the pannels are some of the witnesses' relations. Nor has the Devil any peculiar interest to instigate them thereunto: for several of the pannels have confessed other execrable crimes; whereby it cannot be supposed, that Satan would be divided against himself. God in his ordinary providence has taken such care of public judgments, that the enemy of justice, his special power ceases thereabout, as appears by the witches not being able either to do more harm, or escape after God's ministers being to counteract Satan's instruments by imprisonment. And finally, the oddness of the malefices, the concurrence of the adminicles, and the existence of matters of fact wherein these confessants (though not knowing the same otherwise) do agree with



other unexceptionable witnesses, &c., do sufficiently obstruct their credibility. For as falsehood being a crime, is never presumed; so a person found true in many things, is still presumed to continue such till the contrary be evinced.

“As to the second, we have the testimony of our famous K. J. 6th. Demon. lib. 2. C. ult., telling us, that it is our law, that boys, girls, infamous persons, &c., are not to be rejected any more in Witchcraft, than in human lese majesty, even though they assert others to have been present at imaginary meetings: because this supposes their having entered into a precontract; he says that Satan’s mark and the want of tears, are pregnant aids to the discovery. He gives an instance of a girl, who having named witches in her fits, they were all condemned upon other concurring adminicles. This is not a common author, but a man who as curious, was exact; as prudent did not publish such things without the approbation of the best divines and lawyers; as a prince is to be credited anent the law of his own country: and as a king has determined any dubiety that might have remained in this point, as far as the law of our government will permit.

“But further our judges and lawyers have followed his majesty: for in all the processes of the journals, fame and delation, and the mark, are still sustained, as most pregnant presumptions; whereupon, and a very small probation besides, witches have been frequently condemned. So in the processes against the bewitchers of Sir George Maxwell of Pollok, and Hamilton of Barnes, Anno 1677, *socius criminis*, though under age, is sustained to be a witness: and witnesses are adduced before the inquest for proving, that the mark was found upon some of the witches. Women and minors have been received by multitudes of decisions cited by M’Kenzie, Tit. prob. by witnesses, and Tit. witchcraft. And he also cites decision, where in parallel cases, *socii criminis*, and others inhabile, were admitted; particularly in treason and in falsehood; and all lawyers conclude, that Witchcraft is as much an excepted crime as these.

“As to the third, whatever inhability these witnesses might be under, it is fully made up, and they rendered unexceptionably habile by the chain of this whole business. It is true one man through the concurrence of corrosive humours, may have an insensible mark; another be enviously defamed; a third may through sudden grief or melancholy, not be able to weep, &c., a fourth may be loaded with suspicious circumstances, when extraordinary things fall out in the country; a fifth may be deponed against by two false witnesses, though neither of these separately be truly witches. But by the known observation and experience of mankind, none except witches have had the unhappy medley and concourse of all or most of these *indicia*, and ordinarily, and for the greater part,



witches have them: so that since the rules of judgment are established upon that *quod plerumque sit* which does obtain till an exception be apparent in a special case, the conjunction of these in one person does as plainly give his character, as the most certain symptoms of the plainest disease, being universally concerted in all parts of the world, points out to us that the haver of them is a person truly affected with that disease, whereof he hath the concurrent diagnostics. In a word, one or other of these may concur in the innocent; but no writers do attest, that all of them have concentered in any other person in the world but a witch: and on the other hand, they taking place in Witches, through all parts in the world, must proceed from a common, and not from a peculiar humour or cause.

The specific aptitude, of some of the nicest of the indicia, which appeared from the probation already led to discover a witch, do serve to clear the ground of the world's observation anent them. Particularly the Devil as aping God, imprints a sacrament of his covenant; besides that, commonly this mark being given at the first meeting, does by its intolerable pain force the witch to a second rendezvous for curing it, at which the poor wretch being under this furious necessity, fixes the paction by renewing it with deliberation, having been diverted in the mean time from considering the horridness of the first engagement by the pain. The inability to shed tears may be characteristic of hardening, though not always in the case of Christians; yet in those who have ceased to be such, least the Devil giving them such words of scripture and prayer as many have, it should be impossible to discover their hypocrisy; and that is not Satan's own interest, since by this discovery occasion is given to buffoon the profession of holiness. A report often arises without ground, but a constant repute that keeps footing, implies for the most part a surer cause, especially when it is of persons below envy; and by persons above calumny. The girl falling in fits at approach of the pannels, might proceed from antipathy, arising from the poisonous steams of the witch accustomed to produce that effect through a virtue affixed thereto by the Devil, by conjunction of natural causes (the same way as the invisible pestilence does operate) or his promise of casting the girl in fits at the witch's presence, might have been general; whereby the witch was eventually befooled and discovered, as it often falls out: for Satan envies even their temporal felicity, and fears, lest by continuing here, they should be reft out of his hands by conversion, when they come to perceive the delusion of his promises to make them rich, &c.

There was one thing further which was tried before your lordships, viz., none of the pannels that were tried (though most sagacious and knowing, and perfect in memory, so that it could not

proceed from ignorance or forgetfulness) could make out the attempt of saying the Lord's prayer; which may either be a secret judgment for renouncing their first Lord, after whom it is peculiarly denominate, or by restraint of their new lord, who may think that too special an homage to his adversary. But we have hindered you too long with that which is not necessary: for this being incontrovertible law and custom, there needs no philosophy to support it; since legislators do reason, but subjects must obey: and both the fool and lazy (who have neither read nor thought enough to understand this subject) are to be left to their own chimeras; yet, lest they should insult, we shall answer in their fashion, such of the objections as the pannel's advocate thought anywise worthy to be repeated in this place.

Whereas it is objected, that Delrio, sect. 5. § 4. says, that *socii* are not to be admitted witnesses *ad condemnandum*, especially considering that the probation ought to be *luce meridiana clarior*.

It is answered, that the place itself confutes this inference in the present case: for it says *ex his solis non est procedendum ad condemnationem scio contrarium communius teneri & in praxi obtinere*, &c. So it is evident, 1st, The common opinion and custom is in the contrary, even where there is no other probation, but by the partners of the crime. Yet, 2dly, We are not so straitened, but subsume in his very words, *ex his solis*, we do not desire the pannels should be condemned; but your lordships see these witnesses we are to adduce are not *solis* or alone; for the probations led these last sixteen hours, are so many concomitants and discoveries of providence, which abstruct and make up any defect in their credit that can be desiderate. 3dly, Hence the meaning of that maxim (which is metaphorical, as appears by the words *clarior luce meridiana*, an equal clearness being sufficient) is fully answered, and takes place in the present case; for the extraordinariness of the *corpora delicti*, pregnancy of the adminicles and pointedness of the positive probation, being conjoined; there is not a clearer proof upon record in any nation, than that to which it is hoped these will amount.

Whereas this allegiance is enforced, by pretending it were of dangerous consequence to allow such witnesses to prove meeting with the Devil, since Satan might have represented others by their false shapes.

It is answered, 1st, That we are not straitened in this, because there are many other articles proven, which could not have been falsified. But if we give some scope to reasoning, even in this point, it is to be considered, that the rules of judgment are established upon that which for the most part does still obtain, and rules are to be followed, till an exception be proven in a particular circumstantiate case. But so it is, by the experience and obser-

vation of the wisest divines, lawyers, philosophers, physicians, statesmen, judges, and historians, at home and abroad (that are too wise to be imposed upon, and too ingenuous to deceive us, when they all concur in the same matter of fact) beside the testimony of witches themselves everywhere, makes the apparitions of witches to be commonly and mostly real; and therefore the testimony of the senses is always to be credited anent them, aye and while it be cancelled. For single or few instances of false representations to the senses esteeming them to be true, or a possibility of appearances being false, can nowise invalidate the rule established upon experience, which is common, and for the most part, whereby no exception is to be presumed till it be proven in a special case; since a wonder does not subvert the proof drawn from the common course of nature: logic admits not to argue *a particulari*, or from possibility to existence; law puts the burden of proving simulation on the affirmer, and that which seldom occurs, is not considered by the legislators.

For illustrating of which, it is further to be considered, that for the most part and ordinarily, the witches are personally existent in the places where they appear, because it is more easy for the prince of the air to transport them in his hurricanes which he can raise, as is plain in the instance of Job (who was put in his power, i. e. his natural power without delegation) forming a fence upon their face, whereby the violence of the air may be diverted from choaking them, than to form the curious miniature of such various transactions on their brain: the difficulty whereof is the greater, that all their fancies are not disposed at all times the same way, and they have not the seeds of this work, unless they had once acted it in reality. It is both the greater crime and pleasure to act in truth; which therefore the Devil and witches do rather chuse (unless the place be far distant, or the party indisposed) and this *de facto* is attested to be so, by the writers and witches in all nations and ages, as said is.

2dly, Notwithstanding that the rule must hold, till an exception of exculpation be evinced, *quoad* a particular person, by evidencing that the real appearance was in that special case a true mistake; yet this exception is sufficient for safety of the misrepresented; since the same providence which permitted the affliction, will order the outgate and exculpation, either by the ærial bodies not biding the touch, or some other distinction, as providence commonly allows the Devil to personate only with a cloven foot; or that the apparition was folly to one single witness, who cannot be a proof; or that the innocent can prove *alibi*; or finally, the notour character of a Samuel will purge and dispel the aspersions of Satan, contrived of purpose to discredit the evidence of sense, by which alone his instruments can be discovered. Espe-

cially this character being joined to the other circumstances of the providence; such as, when good men are disguised they are mostly passive in the scene and outwith thereof: whereas witches are personally active in their common life by such words and deeds as (in conjunction with these appearances) conspire to make us know and distinguish them from the truly good; since these witches' open profanity, naughtiness, or unveiled hypocrisy, being cleared by fame, sealed by the mark, and confirmed by the other discoveries of the adminicles that lie proven before you, do still make a land mark betwixt the children of darkness and light. So Delrio, lib. 5. sect. 16. N. 5. tells of Athanasius and St. Germanus against whom probation was adduced for sorcery, but providence did cancel it. It is a famous instance of Susanna, represented by the elders; which, though not in the case of spectre, yet agrees in the rational. The representation by Pharaoh's magicians had concomitants, by which they were discovered and confounded. But lastly, suppose that God, in the depths of his wisdom (to convince the error of nimious self-confidence) should permit all necessary probation to concur against an innocent; yet the judge, following the faith of proofs established by divine and human laws, is altogether innoxious: since this case being very rare, the evil is less than the establishing a principle, by which most of all of these monsters could not be cut off.

Upon the whole, it is certain, that as though oft-times false witnesses set on by the Devil, have taken away a harmless life, by accusing it of other crimes; yet the testimony of witnesses must still be credited till they be redargued; so these appearances of witches with the other specialities before expressed, being proven, ought to be esteemed real, till the fallacy be established. Especially seeing there are examples in ancient and modern history, of Satan's representing the best of men, as committing murder, buggery, &c., in effigy. So Delrio, lib. 5. sect. 16. N. g. relates, that St. Silvanus was represented by the Devil, as committing a common capital crime; and the like of a monk; whereof there are several modern parallel instances; yet this cannot enervate the rule and faith of public judicatures, founded on no more but upon sight of the like appearances; and any argument against the probation in Witchcraft, will equally hold against the probation of any other crime whatsoever; wherefore the rules of them both must be common, as to believing the senses fortified *ut supra*, till their error be individually discovered.

Finally, the certainty is no ways diminished by the extraordinariness of the appearance to the senses: for in law and nature reality, and not simulation, is presumed, till the contrary be made appear, that it is actually false. This is answer enough to those who place a great part of their small wit in nonsensical arguing

against all divine authority : but writers further illustrate that the extraordinariness of a matter of fact, does not exclude its realities being the subject of the testimony of witnesses in our Saviour's miracles, transfiguration, walking on the waters, standing in the midst of the disciples while the doors were shut, and arguing assurance by their senses, that a spirit had not flesh and bones, though indeed the surer word of prophecy did put these beyond doubt.

Nor could it be alleged for the pannels (though they had the last word, as perhaps they have not, in objections against witnesses, since therein *rei fiunt actores* by attacking the witnesses, presumed hability) that it is not conceivable, how the girl or witnesses could see what the bye-standers could not behold : beside the impossibility of the real bodies entering at close doors and windows, or not intercepting the sight of what is at its back.

For this it would be answered, 1st, Proven facts must not be denied, though philosophers have not yet certainly reached the invisible manner of their existence : so in nature the loadstone draws the iron, the compass turns always to the poles, &c. In scripture the angels (and the Devil was once such, retaining as yet his natural powers) smote the Sodomites, that they could not see the door, though they saw the house. Balaam's ass perceived the angel that stood undiscovered to himself ; and the rod thrown down by the magicians of Egypt, was no doubt seen by themselves, though invisible to the bye-standers, which holding of their eyes, interpreters explain to have been done by natural means ; and yet the manner thereof is certainly difficult.

However it is also certain, that if a possible way can be proposed, the reality of a proved fact is not to be contradicted : and this can be done in the present case.

For, 2dly, Satan's natural knowledge and acquired experience make him perfect in the optics and limning : besides that, as a spirit, he excels in strength and agility, whereby he may easily bewitch the eyes of others ; to whom he intends that his instruments should not be seen in this manner, as was formerly hinted, viz., he constricts the pores of the witch's vehicle, which intercepts a part of the rays reflecting from her body ; he condenses the interjacent air with grosser meteors blown into it, or otherwise does violently agitate it, which drowns another part of the rays ; and lastly, he obstructs the optic nerves with humours stirred toward them ; all which joined together, may easily intercept the whole rays reflecting from these bodies, so as to make no impression upon the common sense ; and yet at the same time, by the refraction of the rays gliding amongst the fitted sides of the volatile couch, wherein Satan transports them, and thereby meeting and coming to the eye, as if there were nothing interjacent, the wall or chair behind the same bodies may be seen ; as a piece of money



lying out of sight in a cup becomes visible, how soon the medium is altered by pouring in some water on it. Several of your number do know, that the girl declared, that she saw and heard the doors and windows open at the witch's entry, when, no doubt, the Devil had precondensed a soft postage on the eyes and ears of others, to whom that was unperceived.

So Apollonius escaped Domitian's fright; and Giges became invisible by his magical ring. John of Sarisberrie tells us of a witch that could make any thing not to be seen: and Merjerus relates another that had the like power. Some Italian witches, of greater than ordinary wit, confessed to Grilandus, the Devil opening doors and windows for them, though the more ignorant, by a fascination, think themselves actors of this. Whence it ought not to be doubted by any reasonable man, what in all times and places is so incontestible fact.

Finally, the pannels could not insist, that these confessants are to depone only on their imagination, which can prove no more against themselves or others than a dream.

For still it is to be minded, that there are other proofs to which this is only necessary as a consonant adminicle. But further, *Arg. causa*, it is answered, that the allegiance is a mistake; seeing they are plain matters of fact obvious not only to one, but several of their senses, viz., some of them went the greatest part of the way to these meetings on foot; they there saw and touched their confederates; they heard their combinations to destroy, and torture the infants, girl, and ministers; they returned on foot again, and even when they were carried fore or back, they knew on the next day that it was no dream, the same way as all other mortals discover the difference. But, moreover, this is adminiculate by some real effects of a personal presence, as you have seen in the probation: and yet it is further cleared by the journal of Bargaran's daughter's sufferings; which was attested before the former commissioners, and is notour in the country, particularly, the glass of sack and orange pill, the pieces of the clouted sleeves, the words expressed by the keeper on the sudden murder of the child; which are constantly told by some of the confessants; as also the house being meally that night; the girl, though hoodwinked, her falling in fits at their approach, &c., and others which shall be pointed at to the assize, conjoined together, can be ascribed to no other cause than the real existence of the witches' persons in the place; unless it be said, that Satan might possibly have foisted and suborned all these, and thence it be concluded, that the Devil did actually so, in which case the objectors are the persons that bottom their opinion on imagination, without any positive ground of the reality of what they fancy; yea, against positive grounds of belief in the contrary, which arguing from possibility to existence, is already sufficiently exploded.



Whereas for sustaining the objection, it is likewise alleged, that the confessants having been in the Devil's service, and renounced Christ, they are not capable of the religion of an oath.

1st, In the rules of charity, &c., the confessants, though once witches, yet now they, at least the majority of them, have ceased to be such, having had the use of means by the ministers and word, and actually declared their repentance, and the Devil ceasing to molest them; particularly Elizabeth Anderson was only carried alongst violently by her father, and stood out to the last against her renouncing of her baptism, or consenting to those crimes which were contrived in their meetings. Janet and Margaret Rodgers do testify a great remorse, and avowed the same last sabbath, in the face of the congregation. So those three are sufficient, whatsoever might be said against the other two, especially if we join the improbability either of hazarding their own lives, or the Devil's sending them out against the pannels, of their destroying their own relations, as was remarked before.

But, 2dly, Whether they remain witches or not, it is certain, by reason and experience, that the Devil's peculiar influence ceaseth in and about judgment: by the common course of providence and therefore the authors before cited admit witches whether penitent or not.

3dly, All the defects of their hability are supplied, and the entireness thereof completed, by their testimonies being so wonderful adminiculate; particularly the confessants are constant from the first discovery; uniform in so various circumstances, not only with themselves, but with the girl: they declare nothing but what is probable, most of the pannels have been reputed witches, all of them having the mark; and one or other of them, (to whom the associates delighted in mischief, never missed to join) having had particular irritation to take revenge by the torture and deaths libelled: besides the other adminicles of guilt already proven before you. The confessants were threatened to retract by the pannels themselves and their friends; besides the bad usage from others in the country. They concur with the maleficiat's testimony, and amongst themselves, even when interrogate singly; and upon new things, as several of your number have tried the experiment: the reiteration of the acts which they declare anent some persons whom they never saw except in these congresses; yet whom they know now on the first sight, is unaccountable if they were salaries. And that they are not such, is further abstracted by some of the pannels being delated by a confessing witch in anno 1687. And you know that others delated by these confessants were lately brought in guilty by the verdict of a former inquest, &c., which are so many joint proofs of these witnesses' integrity, and make a chain of evidence and moral demonstration, both against error in themselves, and delusion in relation to others, &c.

There were some things objected out of the law of Scotland, of which I shall give you some touch.

Whereas it was alleged, that *irretiti criminibus capitalibus*, and so under the pursuer's power, cannot be admitted to be witnesses; conform to a statute in *Regiam Majestatem*.

To this it was answered, that we need not say, that these statutes have not the force of the law, except in so far as they are received by custom, unless conform thereto. A laik cannot witness against a clerk, or *e contra*, &c. Nor need we make use of that which is obvious, viz., that these statutes are only common rules in ordinary crimes, such as Witchcraft, &c. *Nam omni regula subverti potest*, and particularly this rule is actually so restricted in the case of Witchcraft, by the opinion of lawyers and customs before-mentioned, which are the best interpreters of laws; for if this application should hold, *socius criminis* could never be admitted; but we positively deny, that those confessants are under our power and influence; seeing that Elizabeth Anderson is not guilty of Witchcraft, for anything that does appear: the Lindsays were never indicted for it; and the diet was deserted against the Rodgers; as the whole commission is to expire against the first of June, betwixt and which time, they are to proceed no further than this particular trial. So that this objection vanishes to smoke.

Whereas it is pretended, that the Rodgers cannot be received, because not given out in the list of witnesses, conform to the regulation, whereby the pannels might have proven their objections by their exculpation.

It was answered, 1st, This objection ought to be repelled, because, besides that the act speaks only of criminal libels, and not indictments, which with the list of the witnesses may be given in far shorter time than the additional list has been given to the pannels, being prisoners; this act is interpreted by the common custom of the justice court; of giving additional lists after the first, upon shorter time than this has been given; as is particularly attested by James Guthrie, macer, who has given them, and who being a person in office, his testimony is to be credited in what relates to his office; so that the old custom confirmed by a decision, August 3d, 1661, where Alexander Forrester was cited *apud acta* against a witch, continues *quoad* this point, as is related by M'Kenzie, page 529. But 2dly, Any objection that the pannels pretend against these witnesses, is *in jure*, or may instantly appear. 3dly, The case is altogether extraordinary and circumstantiate; for the witnesses had not confessed; and so were not existent under that republication when the principal list was given out; whereby the Act of Parliament can only be understood of witnesses that were then existent. And, finally, the pannels got a

general warrant of exculpation for citing of any witnesses they pleased, and they have had several days since they got this additional list, so that they might have cited witnesses to prove their objections, were it not, the truth is they have none besides these that are common, and before answered.

Thus I have given you hints that your own reasoning (which I know to be refined) may improve and apply, so as to dissolve the quibbles which the petty wits, who have not soul enough of themselves to penetrate into the true light of what is recondite, may raise against it; it being their common talent either to skip over the surface of mines, or otherwise to tear asunder some appurtenances of a scheme, and then presently pronounce it mortally maimed.

I must confess, that none could be more sceptical anent the truth of such odd things as I have heard: nor inquisitive for canvassing the reality and explications of them; than I was before my attendances on Bargarran's house, and the several diets of court, and my conversation with some of those concerned thereanent. But now, after all I have seen, reasoned, and heard, I do acknowledge myself entirely captivate by the dictates of natural understanding and common sense into a sound mind and persuasion, that, as there is such a thing as Witchcraft, so it was eminent in its forementioned effect; and the seven pannels were some of the witches.

I have troubled you little with my proper observations: yet lest you should think me either too lazy or peevish, I shall make one, and it is, that I do not think the greater part of the condemned prisoners will ever fully confess; of which conjecture I have two chief grounds, viz., that they are neither ignorant nor melancholic; but, on the contrary, some of them would seem to have been once enlightened before they fell away, so that if this be a sin unto death, there is no appearance that they will glorify God by acknowledgment.

Several of them are of singular knowledge and acuteness beyond the common level of their station: particularly Margaret Lang did make harangues in her own defence, which neither divine nor lawyer could reasonably mend: yet I thought that when they spoke in a matter of any concern, their eyes stood squint and fixed, as if they had been turning their ears and attention to a dictator. Their answers to the trying interrogatories put to them were surprisingly subtle and cautious; though indeed by the industry of some of the judges and lawyers, they were at occasions involved in lies, prevarications, and contradictions; which might have proceeded either from natural or preternatural causes. Some of them were esteemed in the country very sagacious and exact in their business; Margaret Lang having been a midwife, and one

of the Lindsays having acquired a considerable fortune by his tillage and trade; yet it was noticed, something odd either of iniquity or affectation; and Lindsay did finely get off from the sheriff when he was formerly accused in 1687.

Melancholians are lovers of solitude; witches of society and feasts; those are commonly pale and heavy; many of these corpulent and voluptuous. Witches are hard to confess as knowing their guilt; melancholians delight to discover their horriddest damp, because they think them no crime; the one's confessions everywhere are uniform; the other's phantasms are as various as their humours. Finally, Witches teach their trade; whereas conceits would die with them, and could be no more conveyed than the humour which is the specific cause thereof. As these distinguishing characters do hold in general; so it is already manifest, that the real effects in several passages of Bargarran's daughter, were not possibly producible by any imagination or humour; and it is special in this case, that neither the pannels nor confessants were distempered by being kept from sleep, tortured, or the like, which were too usual in former times; but all the measures were strictly observed, that are the requisites of a truly impartial judgment.

Indeed not to have sent unto you the doubles of the depositions themselves; because it is not denied that the depositions are such as they are represented in the pleadings; the chief question being anent the hability of the last deponents. Neither was you to expect the defender's part of the debate, separately by itself, in respect that what was dispersed here and there for them, is faithfully repeated and implied in what you have, as to those points which I thought worthy the notice.

Upon the whole, I do believe, that there is scarcely a more rare providence of this nature in any true history; a more exact caution in any inquiry or trial of this kind; a more clear probation, without confession of the pannels themselves, or a more just sentence, putting together all circumstances upon record.

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## APPENDIX C.

### DOUBLE OF THE INDYTMENT OF THE WITCHES OF BORROWSTOWNES.

ANNAPLE Thomsone, widow in Borrowstownes,

Margaret Pringle, relict of the deceast John Campbell five-wright there, &c.

Yee, and ilk aue of yow, are indytte and accwsed, That where, notwithstanding, be the law of God, particularlie sett down in the

20 chapter of Leviticus, and eighteen chap. of Dewtronomie, and be the lawes and actes of parliament of this kingdome, and constant practiq thereof; particularlie be 73 act, 9 parliament, Q. Marie, the cryme of Witchcraft is declared to be ane horreid, abominable, and capitall cryme, punishable with the paines of death and confiscatiwn of moveables: never the less it is of veritie, that you have committed, and ar gwyltie of the said cryme of Witchcraft, in swa far ye have entered in pactiown with the Devill, the enemie of your salvatiown, and have renounced our blissed Lord and Savior, and your baptizme, and have given your selfes, both soules and bodies, to the Devill, and have bein severall meetings with the Devill, and wyth swndrie witches in diverse places: and particularlie, ye the said Annapple Thomsone had a metting with the Devill the tyme of your weidowhood, before yow was married to your last husband, in your cwming betwixt Linlithgow and Borrowstownes, where the Devill, in the lykness of ane black man, told yow, that yow wis ane poore puddled bodie, and had ane evill lyiff, and difficultie to win throw the world; and promesed, iff ye wald followe him, and go alongst with him, yow should never want, but have ane better lyiff: and, abowt fyve wekes thereafter, the Devill appeired to yow when yow wis goeing to the coal-hill abowt sevin o'clock in the morning. Having renewed his former tentatiown, yow did condeschend thereto, and declared yowrselff content to follow him, and becwm his servant; whereupon the Devil threw yow to the grownd, and had carnal copwlatiown with yow; and ye, and each persone of yow, wis at several mettings with the Devill in the linkes of Borrowstownes, and in the howss of yow Bessie Vickar, and ye did eatt and drink with the Devill, and with on another, and with witches in hir howss in the night tyme; and the Devill and the said Wm. Craw browght the ale which ye drank, extending to abowt sevin gallons, from the howss of Elisabeth Hamilton; and yow the said Annapple had ane other metting abowt fyve wekes ago, when yow wis goeing to the coal-hill of Grange, and he invitted yow to go alongest, and drink with him in the Grange pannes. And yow the said Margaret Pringil have bein ane witch thir many yeeres bygane; hath renounced yowr baptizme, and becwm the Devill's servant, and promise to follow him; and the Devill had carnall copwlatiown with yow, and tuik yow by the right hand, whereby it was, for eight dayes, grevowslie pained, but having it twitched of new againe, it imediatelie becam haille. And yow the said Margaret Hamilton has bein the Devill's servant these eight or nyne yeeres bygane; and he appered and conversed with yow at the town-well at Borrowstownes, and several tymes in yowr awin howss, and drank several choppens of ale with yow, and thereafter had carnal copwlatiown with yow; and the Devill



gave yow ane fyve merk peice of gold, whilk a lyttill efter becam ane sklaitt stane. And yow the said Margaret Hamilton, relict of James Pullwart, has bein ane witch, and the Devill's servant thertie yeeres since, hath renwncid yowr baptizme, as said is, and has had carnall copwlatiown with the Devill in the lyknes of ane man, bot he removed from yow in the lyknes of ane black dowg. And ye, and ilk ane of yow, wis at ane metting with the Devill and wther witches at the croce of Murestaine, above Kinneil, upon the threttin of October last, where yow all danced, and the Devill acted the pyiper, and where yow endeavored to have destroyed Andrew Mitchell, sone to John Mitchell, elder in Dean of Kinniel.

*Precept gra Witches, and the Witnesses and Assyissers, 1679.*

—Cochran of Barbbachlay, Richard Elphinstown of—, —, Saindelands of Hilderstown.—Cornwal of Bonhard, Robert Hamilton of Dechmont, baillzie of the regalltie of Borrowstownes, Sir John Harper advocat, Mr William Duncas, and Mr John Prestowne advocats, commissioners of justiciarie, speciallie constitwte, nominat, and appoynted by the lordes off his Majestie's most honowrable privie counsell for the tryall and jwdging of the persones after namit: To our lovitts——messengers, macers, and officers of the cowrt, our sherriffs in that pairt, conjunctlie and severallie, speciallie constitwte, greitting. For sameikillais the —day of—is appoynted by ws for trying and judging off Annapple Thomsone widow in Borrowstownes, Margaret Pringle, relict of the deceist John Campbell five-wright ther, Margaret Hamilton, relict of the deceist James Pollwart ther, Wm. Craw indweller ther, Bessie Vickar, relict of the deceist James Ponnies, indweller ther, and Margaret Hamilton relict of the deceist Thomas Mitchel, who are apprehendit and imprisoned in the tolbuith of Borrowstownes, as suspect gwilty of the abominable cryme of Witchcraft, by entering into pactiown with the Devill, renouncing their baptizme, and committing of malificies: Wherefoir necessary it is, that the saides persones should be summoned to wnderlye the lawe for the samen, and that witness and assyissers should be united against them, to the effect, and under the paines after specifiet. Herefoir, this precept sein, we charge you passe, and in ovr soveraigne lorde's name and authority, and owrs, comand and chairge the saides persones above-compleaned upon, to compeir befoir ws, or any three of ws, (who are by our said commission declared to be a quorum), within the said tolbuith of Borrowstownes, the nyneteenn day of December nixt, in the howr of cawse, ther to wnderlye the lawe, for the cryme above-spezifiet, and that under the paines contained in the new acts of parliament: and sicklyik, summon, warne and chairge ane assyse of honest and famous persones, not exceeding the number of fortie-five, togither with such honest witness's who best know the veritie of the persones above-



compleaned upon ther gwiltnes, to compeir befor us, day and place foirsaid, in the howr of cawse, the persones of \* witness, to bear leal and soothfast witnessing in the premiss, and the inqueist to passe upon the assyse, each persone under the paine of ane hundreth merks, according to justice, ais ye will answer to us thereupon. The whilk to doe commits to you, conjunctlie and severalie, our fwill power, be thir our lettres, delyvering them be you dewllie execut and indorset againe to the beirer. Given under our hands, at Borrowstownes, the twentie-nynt day of November, ane thousande six hunder and seventie-nyne yeirs.

R. HAMILTON.

J. CORNWALL.

RICH. ELPHENSTONE.

W. DUNDAS.

[A list of the assizes is here given, amounting to fifty; and then follows]

*Order and Warrant for burning the Witches at Borrowstownes,  
Dec. 19. 1679.*

Forsameikle as Annabil Thomson widdow in Borrowstownes, Margaret Pringle relict of the deceast John Campbell ther, Margaret Hamiltown relict of the deceist James Pollwart ther, William Crow indweller ther, Bessie Wicker relict of the deceast James Pennie ther, and Margaret Hamiltown relict of the deceist Thomas Mitchell ther, prisoners in the tolbuith of Borrowstownes, are found guiltie be ane assyse, of the abominable cryme of Witchcraft committed be them in manner mentioned in their dittayes, and are decerned and adjudged be us under subscriyvers (commissioners of justiciary speciallie appoynted to this effect) to be taken to the west end of Borrowstownes, the ordinar place of execution ther, upon Tuesday the twentie-third day of December current, betwixt two and four o'clock in the afternoon, and there be wirried at a steack till they be dead, and thereafter to have their bodies burnt to ashes. These therefoir require and command the baylie principal off the regalitie of Borrowstownes, and his deputts, to see the said sentence and doom put to dew execution in all poynts, as yee will be answerable. Given under our hands at Borrowstownes the nynteenth day of December 1679 years,

W. DUNDAS.

RICH. ELPHENSTONE.

WA. SANDILANDS.

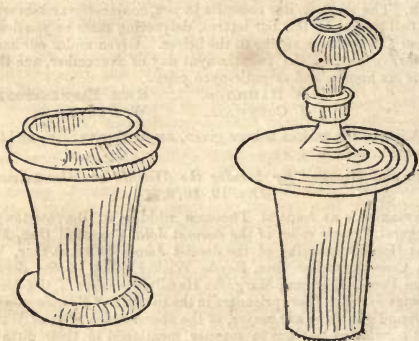
J. CORNWALL.

J. HAMILTON.

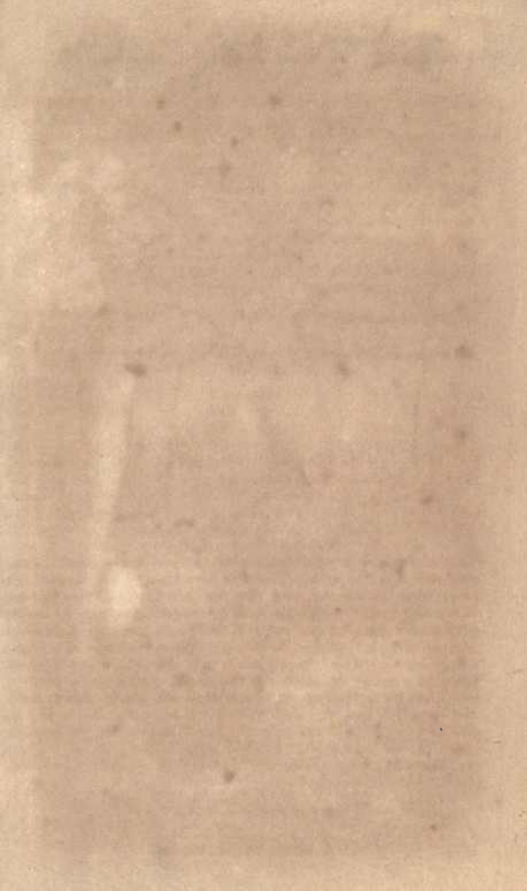
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\* This word is interlined and the word *inquest* forced out.

## MAGGIE LANG'S SNUFF-MILL.



THE above cut is an exact representation of Margaret Lang's snuff-mill. It has remained in the possession of her descendants ever since her murder, and they justly set a high value upon it. It is considerably moth-eaten, and the wood is evidently in a state of rapid decay. We may mention that there were no other kinds of snuff-mills in Scotland, in Maggie's days, than the one represented above. The tobacco leaf was dried and put into the box, (the figure on the left side), and the piston, which has a plate of metal on its bottom, from which protrude small sharp teeth, was inserted into it, and turned round with the hand, by which means the leaf was pulverised and made ready for the nose. Every person who snuffed in those days had a mill for his own use; hence the term, snuff-mill, which is still applied to our snuff-boxes.



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